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FATE OF



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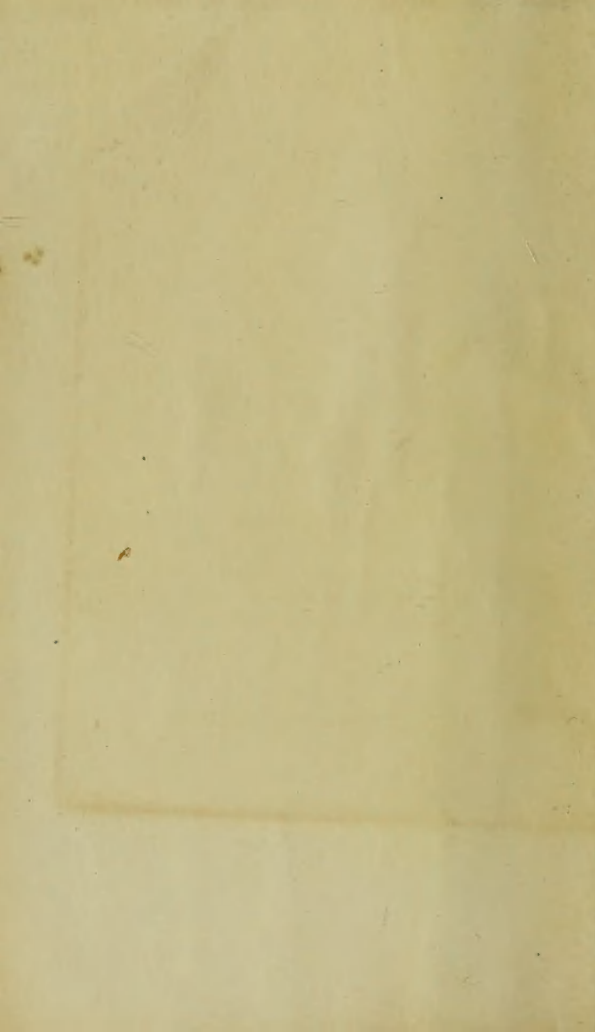
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THE

FATE OF INFIDELITY;

OR

THE DEALINGS OF PROVIDENCE

WITH

MODERN INFIDELS;

TOGETHER WITH

AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING A BRIEF HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE
SPECIAL JUDGMENTS VISITED UPON THE EARLY
OPPOSERS OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY A CONVERTED INFIDEL.

NEW YORK:

EDWARD WALKER, 114 FULTON-STREET.

1848.

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TO

THE FRIENDS OF CHRISTIANITY,

THIS PLAIN AND UNPRETENDING LITTLE VOLUME OF FACTS

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED, BY

THE AUTHOR.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE author of the following pages was, for a number of years, a skeptic in matters of religion—part of the time an Atheist,—and regularly attended the Infidel meetings after their organization by BENJAMIN OFFIN, until the dissolution of the Society known as the “Moral Philanthropists,” when the teachings of a distinguished professor of theology entirely changed his opinions. His long and intimate acquaintance with the Infidel party of this city, made him acquainted with the facts here recorded, many of them having occurred under his own observation.

Since the work was prepared for publication, strenuous efforts have been made to reorganize an Infidel association—conventions and other meetings have been held, and all the influence that the venerable ROBERT OWEN was capable of ex-

erting, was brought to bear ; but the efforts were merely spasmodic, and the opinions, feelings, and interests of the skeptics were so diverse, that a permanent organization could not be effected :—they met, but to quarrel with each other and disband. There is now, however, a society known as the “Liberals,” in existence ; it is composed of some six or eight individuals, of little talent or influence, and will, in all probability, do no great harm to the public.

However remarkable the contents of this little book may appear, the reader will perceive that the events are not only consistent with themselves, but with God’s dealings with the revilers and opposers of Christianity, from the days of Herod, down to the present time. The religion of Christ *cannot* be overthrown ; and those who undertake the task of overthrowing it, will not only fail, but will surely receive the dreadful reward meted out to scoffers and blasphemers.

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FATE OF INFIDELITY.

CHAPTER I.

Historical sketch of Blind Palmer—Studies for the Ministry—Graduates at Dartmouth College—Preaches at Pittsfield, Mass., and at Newtown, L. I.—Acknowledges his unbelief—Removes to Philadelphia—Proclaims himself a Universalist—Openly avows Deism—Attempts to deliver a lecture against the Divinity of Christ—Is prevented by a mob—Retires to the country and studies Law—Is admitted to practice—Sick of yellow fever—Loses his sight—Removes to Georgia and lectures on Deism—Returns to New York and organizes a Deistical society—Dies suddenly in Philadelphia—His society disbands.

ELIHU PALMER, or as he was generally called, *Blind Palmer*, delivered the first lecture in this country in favor of Deism, and organized the first association on this side the Atlantic, for the propagation of Infidel doctrines.

He was born in Norwich, Connecticut, about the year 1763, and as he soon gave evidence of a superior intellect, his parents, although poor,

resolved to give him an education. Being grave and sedate in his manner, and studious in his habits, he was thought to be well calculated for the pulpit, and when of suitable age, was sent to Dartmouth college, where he was educated, as a charity scholar, for the ministry. Soon after he graduated, he established himself at Pittsfield, Massachusetts, where he preached for some time, to the entire satisfaction of his congregation. In the course of time he received a call from Newtown, L. I., which he accepted, and left Pittsfield. On his way to Newtown, he stopped at Sheffield, Mass., and preached a thanksgiving sermon, the extreme liberality of which astonished and displeased his hearers, and for which he was privately, but severely rebuked. Arriving at New York, he was invited to preach for Dr. RODGERS, who also had occasion to reprove him for his anti-Christian sermon. He, however, repaired to Newtown, and took possession of his new charge. Here he became acquainted with a Dr. LEDYARD, who was an

undisguised Infidel, and whose arguments PALMER for a time essayed to refute, but finally told him there was no difference of opinion between them, as he was himself an *unbeliever*, although he preached to suit the views of his people. He had not the magnanimity to be thus honest with his church-members, who were his friends and supporters, but requested his Infidel friend LEDYARD not to expose his hypocrisy, as his pecuniary wants still made it necessary for him to preach Christianity. Desiring a wider field for the exercise of his genius, and knowing that his treachery must eventually be discovered, he resolved to leave Newtown, and removed to Philadelphia, where he at once declared himself a *Universalist*, and preached to one of their societies; but still progressing, he soon astonished his new friends by advertising that he would deliver a discourse against the Divinity of Jesus Christ! This announcement drew together an immense mob in front of the church, which prevented the delivery of the lecture, and PALMER narrowly escaped the

fury of the rioters. He now renounced the pulpit entirely, and retired to the country, where he studied law, and returning to Philadelphia, was admitted to the bar. Soon after his return, which was in 1793, the yellow fever made its appearance in that city, and PALMER and his wife were among its first victims—she died, but he recovered, although the disease had entirely deprived him of sight, (a very unusual thing, and said to be the only case of the kind on record,) which he never regained. His condition was now truly deplorable—in the prime of life, hopelessly blind,—the wife of his bosom dead—poor and friendless—and, to heighten his misfortune, a family of children to provide for. It is admitted by JOHN FELLOWS, who was the biographer of PALMER, that the people of that day considered this sudden and severe affliction a special judgment of God.

PALMER, however, struggled against his hard fate; he attempted to practise his new profession, but his sightless orbs rendered that im-

possible, and he gave up the law. He now sent his children to his relatives in Connecticut, and went by invitation to Augusta, Ga., where he procured the court-house, and gave a course of lectures on Deism. Here he remained about a year, when he left for his native state, but stopping in New York, was prevailed upon to repeat his lectures, at the conclusion of which he organized an association which he called the "*New York Deistical Society.*" For a short time the society flourished finely; but when the novelty of the affair had passed away, a number of his adherents left him,—some were tired of contributing to his support, others renounced Infidelity and united with the Church,—so that he was at last compelled to visit other places to obtain a bare subsistence, and while laboring in the city of Philadelphia, in 1805, he was attacked by pleurisy, and died after a few hours' illness, in the forty-second year of his age.

The founder of the New York Deistical Society being thus suddenly called to his ac-

count, the association disbanded, and in this way Providence arrested, for a time, the efforts of bad men to sow the seeds of Infidelity in New York.

CHAPTER II.

Orange County Infidel Society—Blind Palmer; licentious practices of his disciples—Dolly Thompson; her arrest and banishment—Abandoned character of her daughters—Impious ceremonies at an Infidel meeting—Burning the Bible—Baptizing a cat—Administering the Sacrament to a dog—Quick and remarkable judgments of God upon these blasphemers; thirty-six of whom died as follows: starved to death, 2; drowned, 7; shot, 8; committed suicide, 5; died upon the gallows, 7; frozen to death, 1; killed by accident, 3—Truth of the foregoing proved—Abner Cunningham; his work addressed to Robert Dale Owen, Abner Kneeland, and Houston—Moral reflections.

AMONG the associations organized by Blind PALMER, was a favorite one in Orange county, New York, where a little knot of Infidels had existed for a number of years; and under Palmer's immediate superintendence some thirty or forty individuals, of both sexes, united for the avowed purpose of destroying Christianity! They held, (whatever Palmer may have taught,) among other tenets, that it was right to indulge in lasciviousness, and that it was right to regulate their conduct as their propensities and appetites should dictate; and these principles

were carried into practical operation by some families belonging to the association. In one instance, a son held criminal connection with his mother, and publicly justified his conduct. The stepfather, and husband to the mother who thus debased herself, boldly avowed, that in his opinion it was morally right to hold such intercourse; that the brute creation knew no relations, and made no distinction, and that the human race should be governed by the same natural laws! This family was finally expelled the neighborhood, and their dwelling torn down.

The association frequently met at the house of Dolly Thompson, who kept a tavern near Newburgh. She was one of Palmer's disciples, and entertained views similar to those of the family just described. Her daughters being educated in the same faith, became the inmates of public brothels, and she was finally arrested for harboring robbers, cast into prison, and banished the country. The members of this society were not satisfied with a temperate dis-

cussion of the principles of Christianity, but in their public meetings descended to the commission of acts the most impious and blasphemous. Thus, for instance, at one of their meetings in Newburgh, they burned the Bible, baptized a cat, partook of the sacrament, and administered it to a dog ! Such were the principles and conduct of this association, and if we are to judge by the events of the five years following its organization, we must arrive at the conclusion that God visited them with special judgments, for it is a remarkable fact that all the original members died within that period in some strange or unnatural manner. Some were murdered,—some died on the gallows,—a few starved to death, and others destroyed themselves ; all passing into eternity, as if the curse of God was upon them.

At the Newburgh meeting, above alluded to, there were a number of Infidels present, and on this occasion they appeared to take special pains to bring Christianity and its ordinances into contempt ; but mark what followed. One

of the men who impiously partook of the sacrament, while on his way home, was seized with a sudden and violent illness, and in his agony exclaimed, "*My bowels are on fire—die I must!*" and before the dawn of another day his spirit passed away. Dr. H., another of the same party, was found dead in his bed the next morning. D. D., a printer, three days after, fell in a fit, and died immediately, and three others were drowned within a few days. B. A., a lawyer, came to his death by starvation, and C. C., also educated for the bar, and a man of superior intellectual endowments, died of want, hunger, and filth. But there was one more, (D. M.,) who was present and participated in the blasphemous ceremonies alluded to. He was a man of talent and refinement, with an intellect highly cultivated, and who had been educated for the gospel ministry; when he heard of the singular fate of his companions, he expressed the most fearful apprehensions of his own approaching end, and deeply deplored the folly and wickedness which

led him to destroy the hopes and happiness of his parents. He suddenly disappeared, but at length his remains were found fast in the ice, where he evidently had been for a long time, as the fowls of the air and the inhabitants of the deep had consumed the most of his flesh. Thus perished a few of the leaders in the work of impiety. But the fate of the other members of the association remains to be told.

Joshua Miller, notorious as a teacher of infidelity, was found upon a stolen horse, and was shot by Col. J. Woodhull; N. Miller, his brother, was discovered one Sunday morning seated upon a log, playing cards, and was shot by Zebid June, who was on a scouting party for robbers. Benjamin Kelly was shot off his horse by a boy, the son of one Clark, who had been murdered by Kelly; his body remained upon the ground until his flesh had been consumed by birds. J. Smith committed suicide by stabbing himself, while he was in prison for crime. W. Smith was shot by B. Thorpe and

others, for robbery. S. T.* betrayed his own confidential friend for a few dollars ; his friend was hung, and he was afterwards shot by D. Lancaster, said to have been by accident. J. A. was caught in the act of robbing Abimel Young, for which he was shot by Michael Coleman. J. V. was shot by a company of militia. J. D., in a drunken fit, was frozen to death. J. B. was hung for stealing a horse. C. Smith was hung for the murder of Major Nathaniel Strong. J. Smith and J. Vervellen were hung for robbing John Sacket. B. R. was hung for stealing clothes : one other individual, whose name is not recollected, was hung for murder. N. B. was drowned, after he and J. B. had been confined for stealing an ox. W. T. and W. H. were drowned. C. C. hung himself. A. S. was struck with an axe and bled to death. F. S. fell from his horse and

* The initials only are given in a number of instances, from motives of delicacy, as it is unnecessary to injure the feelings of the surviving relatives of those who perished in the manner recorded.

was killed. W. Clark drank himself to death ; he was eaten by the hogs before his bones were found, which were recognised by his clothing ; his remains were found in a cornfield of John Coffee, which, together with his clothing and rum-jug, were buried without a coffin. He had once been a member of the Presbyterian church, and until he embraced infidelity was an exemplary, industrious, and sober man. J. A., sen., died in the woods, his rum-jug by his side ; he was not found until a dog brought home one of his legs, which was identified by his stocking ; his bones had been picked by animals. J. H. died in a drunken fit. S. C. hung himself, and another destroyed his life by taking laudanum. D. D., and the last we shall mention in this fearful and remarkable catalogue, was hired for ten dollars to shoot a man, for which offence he died upon the gallows. The most of those who survived, were either sent to the state prison, or were publicly whipped and banished for crimes committed against the peace and dignity of the State.

We have now presented a brief history of the Orange county "*Liberals*," as they called themselves. To the Infidel, it presents matter worthy of serious consideration, while the believer will recognise in each event the special judgment of God, which is too clearly indicated to be doubted by any honest or well-regulated mind; but there are those who will doubt the *truth* of the statements made, and therefore, to leave no room for cavil, we will proceed at once to the proof.

In 1836, a small book was published, entitled "Practical Infidelity Portrayed, and the Judgments of God made manifest." It was written by ABNER CUNNINGHAM, well known in New York as a man of undoubted integrity, benevolence, and piety. In the early part of his life he resided in Orange county, and being personally acquainted with the members of the Infidel society spoken of, he published their history, as we have briefly presented it to the reader. In speaking of them, he says: "Those who composed this association were my neigh-

bors ; some of them were my schoolmates ; I knew them well, both before and after they became members. I marked their conduct, and saw and knew their ends." At the conclusion of his history he thus continues : " These examples are within my own knowledge, and not from hearsay. My eyes have seen, and my ears have heard, all that I have here related. I know the facts. But that it may be as ' a nail driven in a sure place,' to that of my own knowledge and testimony, I will here introduce the testimony of several respectable individuals, who certify to many of the awful scenes set forth in the above development of ' God's judgments upon the wicked.' "

" New York, May, 1834.

" I, Henry Daines, of the County of Orang , do certify, that I have read a pamphlet, written by Abner Cunningham, addressed to the Infidel Party ; I am well acquainted with many of the facts contained therein. I saw Claudius Smith, Solomon Gordon, and James Dilemar, hung on

the same gallows at one time ; also, at another time, James Smith, son of said Claudius Smith, with James Verwillin, Samuel McHeath, and James McCormic. I was acquainted with Silas Allen, who became state's evidence against the four last-mentioned persons. Said Allen went into New Jersey, was there convicted of robbery, and hanged. I also knew William Smith, the brother of the above-mentioned James Smith, and saw him after he was shot by Benjamin Thorp, before his death, which took place on the evening of the same day. I also knew Benjamin Kelly, who was shot off his horse by a boy, for the murder of his (the boy's) father. He went some distance into the woods, where he died a miserable death ; and was not found till the crows had actually picked his bones. These facts I learned from the militia guards, who were eyewitnesses of this awful judgment. I was well acquainted with Calvin Gardner ; I knew him to be one of Blind Palmer's advocates. I was within thirty rods of him when he was killed

by lightning. I saw the flash, and I was told by John Jones, that when he begged of him to come down from the hay-stack, he audaciously replied, that 'he could drink a gill of lightning at any time.' I knew, also, William Clark, when he was a man of steady habits, and a member of the church, who afterwards drank himself to death. I found his bones and clothes in a cornfield belonging to John Coffee. The hogs had eaten a considerable part of his flesh, and the remainder had become as dung upon the earth. He had become an advocate for the Infidel party some time before his death. I have no doubt of the truth of many other circumstances and statements made by Abner Cunningham relative to Joshua Miller, as mentioned in the first part of his book. I was well acquainted with the men, and frequently heard the facts of their deaths from those who knew the circumstances well. I am now sixty-eight years of age, and reside in the county of Orange. I further knew Hugh Dobbins, of the same party; he was drowned. Also, Wil-

liam Horton; reported by his son to have fallen overboard, and was also drowned. I well knew Joshua Miller, jun., and his uncle; the former was sent to prison for robbing the store of Joseph Little, in the town of Munroe. The uncle of this man was shot off his horse by Col. J. Woodhull. I also knew Dolly Thompson; and being in the office of constable at the time, I often had to stop at her house, she at the same time keeping a tavern. I have often heard her declare, that she would as soon have sexual intercourse with her son, or brother, as anybody else. I knew Nathaniel Biggs; he was said to have been drowned. I also knew Hoppney Smith; he took a false oath, and for perjury was obliged to fly his country. I knew Isaac Horton, who was said to have died in a drunken fit. I knew T. P., mentioned by said Cunningham: he lost the use of his legs, and moved about on his hands, sliding on his posteriors, for a period of ten years, or thereabouts. I knew J. L., alluded to; I saw him whipped, who was also banish-

ed. Also David Duning, who was hanged for the murder of Jennings. Also J. D., who was frozen to death. Also Thomas Fitch, who, as I was informed, drank himself to death, and was not found until the animals had picked his bones. His clothes and rum-keg were found with his bones. I was told this at the time of the occurrence. I also knew Jewel Smith, the brother of Claudius, who, as I was told, stabbed himself, and thus put an end to his existence, while under guard. Solomon Thompson was shot by David Lancaster, as the said David afterwards told me. I belonged to the guards at the time the first three were executed. Isaac Nichols was sheriff at the time.

“Signed,

“HENRY DAINES.

”Sworn before me,)
this 7th day of June, 1834. }

“WM. W. COWAN,

“*Justice of the Peace.*”

“ City of New York.

“ John Moffat, of the said city, being duly sworn, doth depose and say, that he has been acquainted with the above named Henry Daines a number of years. Considered him always a respectable and worthy man; and further depose, that he saw the said Henry Daines subscribe his name to the foregoing affidavit, in the presence of the deponent.

“ JOHN MOFFAT.

“ Sworn before me, }
this 28th day of June, 1834. }

“ WM. L. MORRIS,

“ Counsellor.”

A second testimony is the certificate of John Demarest, and is as follows :—

“ I, John Demarest, do certify, I am eighty-eight years of age. I have known Abner Cunningham more than sixty years. I have lately read his pamphlet on the subject of infidelity, wherein he has described an association in the

county of Orange, that took place about fifty years ago: I know nearly all the principal parts to be true. That of Daniel Haviland, I not being present, did not hear it, but all the others I know full well. I also know many more facts that are not stated in his book. I know that the said Cunningham, with his father and family, were considered of the first respectability; and that they were always friendly to the cause of liberty. The party alluded to, frequently met at the house of Dolly Thompson, who was afterwards put in prison and then banished. I was myself at the head of a party that surrounded her house, and took four or five prisoners; some of them have been mentioned by said Cunningham, and some have not. There was a party of five or six of them, who robbed at night, and slept in the woods in the day. They usually set a man to watch, but we came upon them while they were sleeping behind a log; the watchman started to run away, but we shot him in the legs and wounded him. We took the

whole of them, and they were sent to prison. How they all fared, I do not now recollect; but some were hanged. I pursued those who stole the ox, and found the place where they killed it in the woods. I was present and assisted in taking Claudius Smith, and saw him with two others hanged at one time. I also recollect four others of the Infidel party, hanged at another time.

“JOHN DEMAREST.”

“I, David Clark, do certify, that I have been acquainted with Abner Cunningham for more than forty years. I have lately read a pamphlet published by him against infidelity; many of the facts therein are well known to me, and I have not the least doubt of all therein being strictly true, as the said Cunningham, and his connections, were considered of the first respectability in Orange county.

“The story of William Clark, therein mentioned, I am well satisfied is true; he was a distant relation of mine. The prophecy of

Daniel Haviland I presume to be true, from the circumstance of its being talked of about the neighborhood, and also from his putting up at my father's house frequently.

‘DAVID CLARK.’

“I accidentally met with a book, written by Abner Cunningham, entitled ‘An Address submitted to the consideration of R. D. Owen, and others;’ the said book contains a remarkable account of a singular prophecy, by my late honored friend, Daniel Haviland;* and the remarkable collections of singular events, bearing every visible mark of Divine judgments,

* The singular prophecy here spoken of is thus related by Mr. Cunningham:—

“After this association (the Orange County Infidel Association) was formed, I attended a religious meeting at which Daniel Haviland, a Quaker, was present, from the county of Dutchess, who rose in the meeting, with trembling limbs, and tears rolling over his furrowed cheek were sprinkled on the floor, and said—‘I saw a vision of those who conspire against my Master! Friends, keep from them! Keep your children from them! I saw the wild boar of the forest making inroads upon them, and every

which followed upon so many of the parties in a most wonderful manner, that it is hardly possible for any reasonable man not to feel instructed and astonished at hearing and believing such singular occurrences. That I might not mislead any person respecting this case, I have carefully inquired into the character and conduct of the said Abner Cunningham, and find him, by all with whom I have conversed, as worthy of belief, and therefore entitled to full credit for any matter of fact which he may make. So far as I have inquired, I have been anxious to consider the matter as if I were investigating and sifting matters to give evidence and integrity their just weight; and were I in that situation to render a verdict, it must be that the facts stated by Abner Cunningham are strictly true and cor-

footstep marked with blood! I shall think strange if they do not die some unnatural and bloody death.' ”

It is a remarkable fact that not one of the original combination survived the term of five years from the prophecy of Haviland

rect; and as he is about to publish a second edition of this valuable little work, in which he intends to add many corroborating occurrences that befell the unhappy sufferers, I heartily wish him success in his well-meant endeavors. I fully anticipate that much good will result from its publication. I hope and trust that it will be a warning voice against the deceitful snares and treacherous devices of the skeptical and unbelieving champions of infidelity. I therefore wish him good success and encouragement, and to this end subscribe my name.

“JOSEPH LANCASTER.”

“I certify, that I have heard from the most respectable ministers in Orange county a similar relation of facts to this of Mr. Cunningham, and I have no doubt of its truth. I therefore cordially recommend it to the notice of believers and Infidels.

“H. G. LUDLOW,
“Pres. Minister.

“*New York City.*”

"To the sentiments of the above we would cheerfully subscribe our names.

THOMAS C. LEVINS, Cath. Min.

MICHAEL LACOST, Meth. Min.

DANIEL COOLEGE,

JOHN SEE,

SAMUEL H. COX, Pres. Min.

"*New York City.*"

"Having read the pamphlet of Abner Cunningham, on the subject of infidelity, and having been acquainted with him in Orange county for several years, and knowing that the facts which he has stated, as far as relate to occurrences at Newburgh, are correct, I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of any part of his statement of facts in the said pamphlet.

"ISAAC LEWIS,

'Pres. Min.

"*New York City.*"

In concluding his history of the Orange county society, the venerable writer says: "I am

now in the seventy-second year of my age. I cannot remain long upon earth. I expect soon to be called to my last account. The foregoing may be considered among my last, perhaps my dying acts ; and my humble desire is, that they may be the cause of breaking down the delusive hopes of those, who, in unguarded moments, have yielded to the folly and delusion of darkness, bigotry, and superstition ; that the Christian religion, in its purity, may have free course and be glorified, and that a fallen world may be brought under its peaceful and benign influence."

We trust that the foregoing affidavits and certificates, from well-known and highly respectable individuals, added to the weight of Abner Cunningham's own unimpeachable character, together with the fact that his work, containing a history of these singular events, which was addressed to Robert Dale Owen, Kneeland, and Houston, has been before the public for more than *ten* years uncontradicted, will be enough to establish the truth of the statements made

in the foregoing chapter, and which clearly demonstrate that God's judgments were fearfully and singularly visited upon those who impiously and vainly sought to destroy that great hope of the world—the Christian Religion.

CHAPTER III.

Thomas Paine—Takes an active part in the French Revolution—Is imprisoned by order of Robespierre—Writes his “Age of Reason” in the Bastile—Lived in momentary expectation of being dragged to execution—His remarkable escape from the Guillotine—Robespierre is beheaded and Paine liberated—Quits France and arrives in New York—Gathers around him a club of Infidels—Becomes grossly intemperate and filthy in his habits—Respectable men abandon his company—Boards with Carver, the horse-doctor—Grant Thorburn’s graphic description of his wretched condition at this time—Amusing and characteristic correspondence between Carver and Paine—Interview between Paine and Major Noah—Death of Paine—Reflections suggested by the life and death of this distinguished Infidel.

WE have seen in the preceding chapters how God disposed of the founder of the first Infidel association, and how fearfully he meted out his special judgments upon the bold blasphemers of Orange county; let us now briefly trace the history of an individual still more prominent in the ranks of infidelity than any heretofore alluded to. Death having deprived the Liberals of their *blind* leader, they sought to retrieve their loss by a closer communion with THOMAS

PAINE, who arrived in New York in 1802, having miraculously escaped from the Bastille and from the Guillotine, to both of which, in the wildness of the French Revolution, he had been condemned. The celebrity and talents of this great apostle of infidelity soon drew around him a number of disciples, who were in the habit of meeting together to mourn over the lost and ruined condition of the Christian world, and to "abuse the Bible for being the cause of every thing bad,"—and thus again was formed a club of Infidels which has existed in New York, in some shape or other, from that period to the present.

The patriotic exertions of PAINE in promoting the cause of American liberty, during our revolutionary struggle, together with his subsequent public career, had rendered his name notorious throughout the world. He was everywhere known as the great champion of Infidelity—as the founder of a new school, which taught the "*perfectability of human reason when left to its own guidance, unshackled by*

priestcraft and superstition." This was the doctrine proclaimed to the world by THOMAS PAINE, who, being *left* to his "own guidance," demonstrated by his life and death, the falsity of his own doctrine. That this was the direct purpose of God, we think can be made manifest by an appeal to historical facts.

It will be remembered that PAINE took a very active part in the French Revolution—that he was a member of the National Convention, and that he was thrown into prison by Robespierre. While thus immured within the gloomy cells of the Bastille, he wrote a portion of his celebrated "*Age of Reason*," and lived in momentary expectation of being dragged to execution: but he was not *thus* to die—his *life* was to confute his own doctrine, for which purpose, as we believe, God, in his mysterious providence, saved him from death in a most remarkable manner. He was confined in a dungeon, and his name was on the list of those ordered for execution on a certain morning. It was customary for the clerk of the tribunal to

go through the cells at night, and put a cross with chalk on the back of the door of such as were to be guillotined the next morning. When the executioner came round with his guard, wherever they found a chalk, the victim was brought forth. There was a long passage in the cellar, or dungeon, of this Bastile, having a row of cells on each side, containing the prisoners; the passage was secured at each end, but the doors of the cells were chiefly left open, and sometimes the prisoners stepped into one another's rooms to converse. PAINE had just gone into the next cell, and left his door open, back to the wall; thus having the inside out. Just then came the chalkers, and, probably being drunk, crossed the inside of PAINE's door. Next morning, when the guard came with an order to bring out twenty, and finding only nineteen chalks, (PAINE being in bed, and his door shut,) they took a prisoner from the further end of the passage, and thus made up the number. So Mr. PAINE escaped; and before the mistake was discovered—about forty

eight hours after—a stronger party than Robespierre's cut off his head, and about thirty of his associates'; and PAINE was liberated.

Having thus escaped the axe of the executioner, he finally left the bloody streets of Paris, and sought refuge in a *Christian* land, where the *Bible* was recognised as the Word of God; where the Sabbath was faithfully regarded; and where divine homage was paid to the *Supreme Being*, and not to the "*Goddess of Reason!*" He had not been long in this country before the more respectable portion of his friends began to desert him, in consequence of his gross intemperance and filthy habits. However much they may have admired his writings, the *man* they shunned. After he had become quite debased, he obtained boarding of one WILLIAM CARVER, a blacksmith and horse-doctor, and who was, moreover, one of his most ardent disciples.

A graphic description of PAINE's condition at this period of his life, is given by GRANT THORBURN, in his work entitled "*Forty Years*"

Residence in America.” “Carver and I,” says Mr. T., “had wrought journey-work together, in the same shop, ten years before that period ; so having free access to his house, I frequently called to converse with Mr. PAINE. One evening, he related to me the anecdote of his escape from the guillotine, upon which I asked him what he thought of his almost miraculous escape ? He said the *Fates* had ordained he was not to die at that time. Says I, ‘ Mr. PAINE, I will tell you exactly what I think. You know you have written and spoken much against the religion of the Bible ; you have extolled the perfectability of human reason when left to its own guidance, unshackled by priestcraft and superstition ; the God in whom you live, and move, and have your being, has spared your life that you might give to the world a living comment on your own doctrines. You now show to the world what human nature is when left to itself to wander in its own counsels. Here you sit, in an obscure, uncomfortable dwelling, powdered with snuff and stupified

with brandy—you, who was once the companion of Washington, Jay, and Hamilton, are now deserted by every good man; and even respectable Deists cross the streets to avoid you.' He said he cared 'not a straw for the opinions of the world.' Says I, 'I envy not your feelings.' So we parted. In short, he was the most disgusting human being you could meet in the street. 'Through the effect of intemperance, his countenance was bloated beyond description; he looked as if God had stamped his face with the mark of Cain. A few of his disciples, who stuck to him through good and through bad report, to hide him from the gaze of men, had him conveyed to Greenwich, where they supplied him with brandy till he died."

But it may be said, that inasmuch as Mr. THORBURN was opposed to PAINE's theological views, and that he believed in the doctrine advanced in this work, that he might therefore give an exaggerated view of PAINE's actual condition. Should the reader be inclined to

this belief, his doubts will be removed by the following correspondence between CARVER and PAINE, which may be found in Cheetham's Life of Paine, published in 1809.

No. I.

New York, Nov. 21st, 1806

CITIZEN FRIEND :

I take this opportunity to inform you that I am in want of money, and should think it as a favor if you would settle your account : you must consider that I have a large family, and nothing to support them with but my labor. I have made a calculation of my expenses on your account, the last time that you was at my house, and find they amount to one hundred and fifty or sixty dollars : your stay was twenty-two weeks, and Mrs. Palmer twelve weeks' board on your account. I expect, therefore, you will have the goodness to pay me ; for you must recollect you was with me almost the whole of winter before last, for which you only gave me four guineas. If I, like yourself, had an inde-

pendent fortune, I should not then require one cent of you ; but real necessity, and justice to my family, thus prompt me to urge payment from you.

Yours, in friendship,

WILLIAM CARVER.

MR. THOMAS PAINE.

No. II.

MR. CARVER :

I received your letter of the 21st inst., and as there are several mistakes in it, I sit down to correct them. You say to me in your letter —“ You must recollect you was with me almost the whole of the winter before last, for which you only gave me four guineas.” This is a misstatement in every part of it. I paid you four dollars per week for the time I was at your house. I told you so, when I gave you the money, which was in the shop. I had lodged and boarded at Mr. Glen’s in Water-street, before I came to your house. I paid him five dollars per week, but I had a good

room, with a fireplace ; and liquor found for dinner and supper. At your house I had not the same convenience of a room, and I found my own liquor, which I bought of John Fellows, so that you were paid to the full worth of what I had. As I paid by the week, it does not signify how long or short the time was ; but certainly it was not "*almost the whole of the winter.*" I had burnt out my wood at Mr. Glen's, and did not choose to buy a new stock, because I wanted to go to New Rochelle to get Purdy off the farm ; I therefore came to your house in the mean time. How does it happen that those who receive do not remember so well as those who pay ?

You say in your letter, " You have made a calculation of your expenses on my account the last time I was at your house, and find that they amount to one hundred and fifty or sixty dollars—that I was twenty-two weeks, and Mrs. Palmer twelve weeks on my account." I know not how you calculate, nor who helps you—but I know what the price of

boarding is. The time I was at your house consists of two parts. First, from the time I came from New Rochelle till I was taken ill; and from thence till I came away, Nov. 3d; I know not exactly the time I came from New Rochelle, but I can know by writing to Mr. Shute. I know it was some time before the eclipse, which was the 16th of June. The time I was taken ill I can know by referring to my will, which is in the hands of a friend.

You seem not to know any thing about the price of boarding. John Fellows took board and lodging for me and Mrs. Palmer at Winship's, Corlaer's Hook. Winship asked seven dollars per week for me and her. The room I was to have was a handsome, spacious room, and Mrs. Palmer had none, nor a fire to come to when the weather grew cold. As to myself, I suffered a great deal from the cold. There ought to have been a fire in the parlor.

The things which Mrs. Palmer did for me were those which belonged to the house to do—making the bed and sweeping the room;

and when it happened Mrs. Palmer was not there, which often happened, I had a great deal of trouble to get it done; the black woman said she should not do any thing but what Mrs. Carver told her to do, and I had sometimes to call John from his work to do the servant-woman's work, and your wife knew it. Sometimes the room became so dirty that people that came to see me took notice of it, and wondered that I stayed in such a place. I am at a loss to understand you when you say, "I have made a calculation of my expenditures *on your account*, and find they amount to one hundred and fifty or sixty dollars." Why did you not send me the particulars of that expenditure, that I might know if these particulars were true or false? The expense, however, that you were at on my account was the addition of one more to your family than you had before I came, and no more, except for the time Mrs. Palmer was there, which *was not twelve weeks*, and your wife often called her down to cut out and make

things for herself and children. I had tea with brown sugar, and every thing else in common with the fare of the kitchen ; so that, unless I ate more than anybody else, I was of no more expense than anybody else. What liquor I had I sent out for myself. On what ground then is your calculation founded ? I suppose the case is, that you have been a good deal cheated, and your wife and son try to make you believe that the expense has been incurred upon my account.

I had written thus far on the Sunday evening, when Mr. Butler called to see me, and I read it to him, and also your letter ; and I did the same to John Fellows, who came afterwards. Anybody seeing your letter, and knowing no further, would suppose that I kept you out of a great deal of property, and would not settle the account. Whereas the case is that I told you, the last time you came for money, and I gave you ten dollars, that I did not choose to pay any more till the account was settled ;---and you ought, therefore, to have

come for that purpose, instead of writing the letter you did, which contains no account at all. I did not like the treatment I received at your house. In no case was it friendly, and in many cases not civil, especially from your wife. She did not send me my tea or coffee till everybody else was served, and many times it was not fit to drink. As to yourself, you ought not to have left me the night I was struck with the apoplexy. I find you came up in the night and opened the little cupboard, and took my watch—did you take any thing else?

I shall desire John Fellows and Mr. Morton to call on you and settle the account, and then I desire that all communications between you and me may cease. Butler called on me last evening, Tuesday, and told me your goings on at Martin's, on the Sunday night. I did not think, Carver, you were such an unprincipled, false-hearted man as I find you to be; but am glad I have found it out time enough to dispossess you of all trust I reposed in you, when I

made my will, and of every thing else to which your name is there mentioned.

THOMAS PAINE

No. III.

MR. THOMAS PAINE :

I received your letter, dated the 25th ult., in answer to mine, dated November 21, and after minutely examining its contents, I found that you had taken the pitiful subterfuge of lying for your defence. You say that you paid me four dollars per week for your board and lodging, during the time that you were with me, prior to the first of June last; which was the day that I went up by your order to bring you to York, from New Rochelle. It is fortunate for me, that I have a living evidence that saw you give me four guineas, and no more, in my shop, at your departure at that time; but you said you would have given me more, but that you had no more with you at present. You say, also, that you found your own liquors

during the time you boarded with me ; but you should have said, “ I found only a small part of the liquor I drank during my stay with you ; this part I purchased of John Fellows, which was a demijohn of brandy, containing four gallons, and this did not serve me three weeks.” This can be proved, and I mean not to say any thing that I cannot prove ; for I hold truth as a precious jewel. It is a well-known fact, that you drank one quart of brandy per day, at my expense, during the different times you have boarded with me, the demijohn above mentioned excepted, and the last fourteen weeks you were sick. Is not this a supply of liquor for dinner and supper ? As for what you paid Mr. Glen, or any other person, that is nothing to me. I am not paid, and found you room and firing besides. You say as you paid by the week, it matters not how long your stay was. I accede to your remark, that the time of your stay at my house would have been of no matter, if I had been paid by the week, but the fact is otherwise. I have not been paid at all,

or at least, but a very small part ; prove that I have if you can, and then I shall be viewed by my fellow-citizens in that contemptible light that they will view you in, after the publication of this my letter to you. You ask me the question, "How is it that those who receive do not remember as well as those that pay?" My answer is, I do remember, and shall give you credit for every farthing I have received, and no more. I will ask you what consolation you derive to your mind in departing from truth, and endeavoring to evade paying a just and lawful debt? I shall pass over a great part of your letter with silent contempt, and oppose your false remarks with the plain truth. As the public will see your letter as well as mine, they will be able to judge your conduct and mine for themselves. You say that I seem not to know any thing about the price of boarding in the city ; but I know the price is from three dollars to five, and from that to ten ; with an additional charge if the boarder should be sick for three months or upwards.

I shall show you how I calculate my expenditures, by the bill that will be rendered to you, and I believe it will be an important lesson to those who may undertake to board you hereafter. I have no person to help me calculate or write, but fortunately took the advice of a friend, and got him to keep the account of all the times you stayed with me. You assert that your being at my house only added one more to the family; I shall prove that it added to the number of three. You know very well when you came, I told you I must hire a servant-girl if you stayed with me. This I did for five months, at five dollars per month and her board. This I would not have done, unless you had given me ground to believe you would have paid me. After your departure, she was discharged. Now, sir, how will you go to prove that yourself, and Mrs. Palmer, and the servant-girl are one? In order to do this you must write a new system of mathematics. You complain that I left your room the night that you pretend to have been seized with the

apoplexy ; but I had often seen you in those fits before, and particularly after drinking a large portion of ardent spirits, those fits having frequently subjected you to falling. You remember you had one of them at Lovett's hotel, and fell from the top of the stairs to the bottom. You likewise know I have frequently had to lift you from the floor to the bed. You must also remember that you and myself went to spend the evening at a certain gentleman's house, whose peculiar situation in life forbids me to make mention of his name ; but I had to go to apologize for your conduct ; you had two of those falling fits in Broadway, before I could get you home.

You tell me that I came up stairs in the night, and opened the cupboard, and took your watch. This is one more of your lies ; for I took it during the time your room was full of different descriptions of persons called from a porter-house and the street, at the eleventh hour of the night, to carry you up-stairs, after you had fallen over the banisters : and

as the cupboard door was open, the watch lay exposed. I told you next morning I put your watch in my desk, and you said I had done right. Why did you not complain before? I believe that I should do the same again, or any other person in my situation; for had the watch been lost, you would have thought that I, or some one of my family, had got it. I believe it will not be in your power to make one of my fellow-citizens believe, that at this period of my life I should turn rogue for an old silver watch.

You go on to say, "Did you take any thing else?" Have you assumed the character of a father-confessor, as well as a son of Bacchus? Did you lose any thing? Why do you not speak out? You have been so long accustomed to lying, one more will not choke you. Now, sir, I have to inform you I lost a silver spoon that was taken to your room, and never returned. Did you take that away with you? If not, I can prove that you took something else of my property without my consent. You

likewise gave a French boy, that you imported to this country, or was imported on your account, a nice pocket bottle, that was neither yours nor mine; it being the property of a friend, and has since been called for. I lent the bottle to you, at the time you was sick with what you call apoplexy, but what myself and others know to be nothing more than falling drunken fits. I have often wondered that a French woman and three children should leave France, and all their connections, to follow Thomas Paine to America. Suppose I were to go to my native country, England, and take another man's wife, and three children of his, and leave my wife and children in this country. What would be the natural conclusion in the minds of the people, but that there was some criminal connection between the woman and myself? You have often told me that the French woman alluded to, has never received one letter from her husband, during the four years she has been in this country. How comes this to pass? Perhaps you can explain

the matter. I believe you have broken up the domestic tranquillity of several families with whom you have resided; and I can speak by experience as to my own. I remember you undertook to fall out with my former wife—and one of the foolish epithets you attempted to stigmatize her with was, that she originally was only in the character of a servant.—Was this a judicious remark of the “author of the Rights of Man?” I well remember the reply she made to you, which was—that you had not much to boast of on that ground, as yourself had been a servant to the British government. And now again you try to break up our tranquillity, by insinuating that my wife and son have deprived me of my property. I call this pitiful employment for a man who calls himself a philanthropist. When you tell me that Mrs. Palmer did the work belonging to my family, you know the assertion to be false, which can be proved by her and others that resided in the house. You have written well on just and righteous principles, and dealt them out to

others, but totally deny them in practice yourself; and for my part, I believe you never possessed them. An old acquaintance of yours and mine called on me a few days ago. I asked him if he had not been to see you. His answer was, he had not, neither did he want to see you. He said he believed that you had a very good head, but a very bad heart. I believe he gave a true description of your character in a few words. It has been my opinion for some time past, and many more of those you think are your friends, that all you have written has been to acquire fame, and not the love of principle; and one reason that led us to think as we do, is, that all your works are stuffed with egotism. You say, further, that you were not treated friendly during your stay with me, and hardly civilly. Have you lost all principles of gratitude, as well as those of justice and honesty, or did you never possess one virtue?

From the first time I saw you in this country, to the last time of your departure from my

house, my conscience bears me testimony that I treated you as a friend and a brother, without any hope of extra rewards,—only the payment of my just demands. I often told many of my friends, had you come to this country without one cent of property, then, as long as I had one shilling, you should have a part. I declare, when I first saw you here, I knew nothing of your possessions, or that you were worth four hundred sterling per year. I, sir, am not like yourself. I do not bow down to a little paltry gold, at a sacrifice of just principles. I, sir, am poor, with an independent mind, which perhaps renders me more comfort than your independent fortune renders you. You tell me, further, that I shall be excluded from any thing and every thing contained in your will. All this I totally disregard. I believe, if it was in your power, you would go further, and say you would prevent my obtaining the just and lawful debt you contracted with me; for when a man is vile enough to deny a debt, he is not honest enough to pay

without being compelled. I have lived fifty years on the bounty and good providence of my Creator, and I do not doubt the goodness of his will concerning me. I likewise have to inform you that I totally disregard the powers of your mind and pen; for should you, by your conduct, permit this letter to appear in public, in vain may you attempt to print or publish any thing afterwards. Do you look back to my past conduct respecting you, and try if you cannot raise one grain of gratitude in your heart, towards me, for all the kind acts of benevolence I bestowed on you. I showed your letter, at the time I received it, to an intelligent friend; he said it was a characteristic of the vileness of your natural disposition, and ought to damn the reputation of any man. You tell me that I should have come to you, and not written the letter. I did so three times; and the last you gave me the ten dollars, and told me you were going to have a stove in a separate room, and then you would pay me. One month has passed, and I wanted

the money, but still found you with the family that you resided with ; and delicacy prevented me from asking you for pay of board and lodging. You never told me to fetch the account, as you say you did. When I called the last time but one, you told me to come on the Sunday following, and you would pay or settle with me. I came according to order, and found you particularly engaged with the French woman and her two boys : whether the boys are yours, I leave you to judge ; but the eldest son of the woman, an intelligent youth, I suppose about fourteen years of age, has frequently told me and others, that you were the complete ruin of their family, and that he despised you ; and said your character, at present, was not so well known in America as in France.

You frequently boast of what you have done for the woman alluded to ; that she and her family have cost you two thousand dollars, and since you came the last time to New York, you have been bountiful to her, and given her one hundred dollars at a time. This may be all

right. She may have rendered you former and present secret services, such as are not in my power to perform; but at the same time, it would be just in you to pay your debts. I know that the poor black woman at New Rochelle, that you hired as a servant, who, I believe, paid every attention to you in her power, had to sue you for her wages, before you would pay her, and Mr. Shute had to become your security.

A respectable gentleman from New Rochelle called to see me a few days past, and said that everybody was tired of you there, and no one would undertake to board and lodge you. I thought this was the case, as I found you at a tavern, in a most miserable situation. You appeared as if you had not been shaved for a fortnight, and as to a shirt, it could not be said that you had one on; it was only the remains of one, and was nearly the color of tanned leather; and you had the most disagreeable smell possible, just like that of our poor beggars in England. Do you not recollect the pains I took to clean you? That I got a tub of warm water and

soap, and washed you from head to foot, and this I had to do three times, before I could get you clean. I likewise shaved you and cut your nails, that were like birds' claws. I remember a remark that I made to you at the time, which was, that you put me in mind of Nebuchadnezzar, who is said to have been in this situation. Many of your toe nails exceeded half an inch in length, and others had grown round your toes, and nearly as far under as they extended on the top. Have you forgotten the pains I took with you when you lay sick, wallowing in your own filth? I remember that I got Mr. Hooton, (a friend of mine, and whom I believe to be one of the best-hearted men in the world,) to assist me in removing and cleaning you. He told me he wondered how I could do it; for his part, he would not like to do the same again for ten dollars. I told him you were a fellow-being, and that it was our duty to assist each other in distress. Have you forgotten my care of you during the winter you stayed with me? How I put you in bed every night, with a warm brick

to your feet, and treated you like an infant a month old? Have you forgotten, likewise, how you destroyed my bed and bedding by fire, and also a great-coat that was worth ten dollars? I have shown the remnant of the coat to a tailor, who says that cloth of that quality could not be bought for six dollars a yard. You never said that you were sorry for the misfortune, or said that you would recompense me for it. I could say a great deal more, but I shall tire you and the public's patience. After all this, and ten times as much more, you say you were not treated friendly or civilly. Have I not reason to exclaim, and say—O the ingratitude of your obdurate heart!

You complain of the room you were in, but you know it was the only one I had to spare—it is plenty large enough for one person to sleep in. Your physicians and many others requested you to remove to a more airy situation, but I believe the only reason why you would not comply with the request was, that you expected to have more to pay, and not to be so well at-

tended ; you might think nobody would keep a fire, as I did, in the kitchen, till 11 or 12 o'clock at night, to warm things for your comfort, or take you out of bed two or three times a day, by a blanket, as I and my apprentice did for a month : for my part, I did so till it brought on a pain in my side, that prevented me from sleeping after I got to bed myself.

I remember, during one of your stays at my house, you were sued in the justices' court, by a poor man, for the board and lodging of the French woman, to the amount of about thirty dollars ; but as the man had no proof, and only depended on your word, he was nonsuited, and a cost of forty-two shillings thrown upon him. This highly gratified your unfeeling heart. I believe you had promised payment, as you said you would give the French woman money to go and pay it with. I know it is customary in England, that when any gentleman keeps a lady, he pays her board and lodging. You complain that you suffered with the cold, and that there ought to have been a fire in the parlor. But

the fact is, that I expended so much money on your account, and received so little, that I could not go to any further expense, and if I had, I should not have got you away. A friend of yours that knew my situation, told you that you ought to buy a load of wood to burn in the parlor; your answer was, that you should not stay above a week or two, and did not want to have the wood to remove; this certainly would have been a hard case for you, to have left me a few sticks of wood.

Now, Sir, I think I have drawn a complete portrait of your character; yet to enter upon every minutiae would be to give a history of your life, and to develop the fallacious mask of hypocrisy and deception, under which you have acted in your political as well as moral capacity of life. There may be many grammatical errors in this letter. To you, I have no apologies to make; but I hope the candid and impartial public will not view them "with a critic's eye."

WILLIAM CARVER.

THOMAS PAINE.

New York, Dec. 2, 1806.

This letter, and its graphic description of PAINE's condition, has always been a source of regret and mortification to his disciples, and they have ever shown a disposition to deceive the public in relation to his actual state, at the close of his career, notwithstanding the fact was notorious that he was a filthy drunkard, universally despised, and generally abandoned by men of his own belief. In VAIL's Life of PAINE, the attempt is actually made to prove that he was not even a hard drinker ! and the correspondence between PAINE and CARVER, which so accurately portrays the private character and habits of the man who was to overthrow Christianity, is denominated a foolish one, conducted in anger, and not intended for publication. It is, however, due to CARVER, to say that the difficulty between PAINE and himself was amicably arranged, and that to the end of his life, it was CARVER's boast that he was the personal friend and disciple of the author of the "Age of Reason." But the facts touching PAINE's real condition could not be recalled or denied, and there

are yet some men living, who were personally acquainted with PAINE, whose testimony fully corroborates the descriptions of THORBURN and CARVER, among whom may be mentioned M. M. NOAH, who, in noticing the celebration of PAINE's birthday, (the 107th anniversary,) thus describes his personal appearance, as witnessed by himself:—

“We once paid TOM PAINE a visit, in company with JACOB FRANK, editor of the Public Advertiser. He lodged in the second story of a house in Pearl-street, above Peck slip. His sitting-room was nearly destitute of furniture—a plain pine table, a few wooden chairs, a bottle on the mantelpiece with a part of a candle in it, and a broken looking-glass, were all the visible accommodations of the great writer. He soon made his appearance from his bed-chamber. His figure was rather tall and somewhat thick-set—his hair was dishevelled, and filled with feathers and light down—he wore a tattered nightgown tied round his waist—stockings which had once been white,

and leather slippers, and, we believe, no breeches or pantaloons—it being a warm summer day. His face was bloated, and his small piercing eyes twinkled over a huge nose covered with carbuncles nearly as large as Bar-dolph's. His whole figure and appearance indicated the character of a sot—a person who had been accustomed to good society, but who had fallen from his high estate. He commenced talking on local politics—was remarkably bitter and severe, using harsh and reviling language towards CHEETHAM, and all who in those times had taken sides against him; and we saw at once that he was only the remnant of that eminent genius who had played so conspicuous a part in the great theatre of our revolution. He was positively gross and vulgar in his language and manners—blew his huge nose occasionally with a piece of newspaper, and abused every one by the wholesale. He was, however, occasionally interesting, and went over his reminiscences of the French revolution and the hair-breadth escapes he had

made from the guillotine—related anecdotes of his colleagues in the French chamber in 1793—and of his friend Danton, whom he represented as a true patriot.

“PAINE finally became poor, and a hard drinker—quarrelled with his friends, and could live with none, and at length repaired to a farm at New Rochelle, which Congress gave him for his revolutionary services, where he died.”

The last moments of PAINE have always been a matter of interest, and were for a time the subject of much controversy: it was contended by some that when death approached, he renounced his infidelity; but it is now conceded that he died in his unbelief, and in great agony. A friend who visited him, said he never saw a man in so much apparent distress. He sat with his elbow on his knee, and his head leaning on his hand; and beside him stood a vessel to catch the blood that was oozing from him in five different streams; one from the corner of his mouth, one from each eye, and one from each nostril! He endeavored

to draw him into conversation, but was only answered by horrible looks and dreadful groans, frequently exclaiming, "Lord, help! Lord, help! Lord Jesus, help!" The physician who stood by his bedside, being surprised at hearing him call upon the *Lord Jesus* for help, thus addressed him—"Mr. PAINE, as you have published your sentiments to the world, I ask you now, as a man who will be in eternity before an hour, am I to understand you as really calling upon the *Lord Jesus* for help?" After a moment's reflection, he replied—"I don't wish to believe on that man!" and with this declaration upon his lips he died.

His remains were not permitted to be deposited in the burial-ground at New Rochelle, where he died, but in a solitary place upon his own farm,—a plain slab indicating the spot; this, however, was soon broken into fragments, which were gradually taken away by the curious who visited the tomb, until, at length, not a particle remained; and to complete the singular fate of this man, the sanctity of his grave

was still further violated by COBBETT, who, in company with a few other English radicals, went to New Rochelle at night, dug up the body and stole away the bones, which he carried to England, where he intended to have them manufactured into buttons to be worn by the Radicals in a monster procession which he contemplated getting up in honor of PAINE; but neither of these objects was ever accomplished, and the bones being found among the bankrupt effects of COBBETT, were exposed to public sale, and were purchased by some lover of curiosities !

We trust the reader has not failed to discover in this brief history of PAINE's career, the truth of God's declaration, that the iniquitous shall be "visited with judgments." PAINE was endowed with a superior intellect, which he used with great effect in achieving the liberties, and establishing the rights of man; for which his name was held in the highest regard by the lovers of freedom throughout the world. At one period of his life, no

man stood higher in the estimation of the great and good, than THOMAS PAINE, but from the moment he began to use his commanding talents to oppose or break down Christianity, his degradation and downfall commenced, and continued until at last he became a loathsome, disgusting wreck, despised and almost entirely abandoned by his race, his flesh manuring the soil in one part of the world, and his bones converted to baser purposes in another ! Who cannot see in all this the JUDGMENTS OF GOD ?

CHAPTER IV.

Incidents in the life of WILLIAM CARVER—His religious education—Unites with the Baptist church—Is induced to hear Blind Palmer lecture on Deism—Renounces Christianity—Anecdote of Paine and Carver—Writes Paine's Epitaph—Fails in business—Becomes a beggar—Interview with Grant Thorburn—Goes to the Almshouse—Curious scene at Tammany Hall between Carver and Kneeland—Is arrested by the City Watch—Scene at the Watch House—Attempts to commit suicide—Writes his epitaph—Is supported by Infidels—Is found dead in his room—Strange death of another member of the Infidel association—The President of the Infidel association suddenly dies at one of their meetings—The Society, astounded, disbands—Brief notice of John Fellows.

AMONG the most prominent and noisy members of PALMER's Deistical Society, was WILLIAM CARVER, with whom the reader is already acquainted. He was an Englishman by birth, and came to this country about the year 1790, an intelligent, industrious, and enterprising man, having a wife and a family of children. He had been piously educated, and before he left his native land, professed Christianity, and became a member of the Baptist church, with which he united upon his arrival here ; and, as

regularly as the Sabbath came, he was seen with his wife and children wending his way to the sanctuary. He was now a happy man—in the full enjoyment of domestic bliss, heightened by the pleasures which religion alone can afford, and respected by a large circle of friends, which greatly contributed to his prosperity in business. He was an ardent democrat, and being somewhat radical in his notions, he soon became acquainted with the *ultraists* of all parties, and was finally led to the Assembly Room in William-street, to hear *blind Palmer* descant upon the beauties of deism and the glories of infidelity ! At first he was shocked by the impiety of the doctrines he heard there ; but he went again, and again, each time drinking deeply at the corrupt fountain, and at last entirely forsook his first love—renounced his religion, and embraced the dark and cheerless doctrines of PAINE, of whom he was now a most devoted disciple.

PALMER being dead, PAINE received all CARVER'S attention, and the love he bore him

amounted almost to adoration, which continued unabated and uninterrupted, except for a brief period, as long as CARVER lived. PAINE also held CARVER in high estimation, and considered him the only man capable of writing his *epitaph*, for which purpose he once sent for him, believing his life to be rapidly drawing to a close. CARVER esteemed it a great honor to be thus selected, and after a little reflection produced the following :—

“ Here lies the body of the great patriot Thomas Paine,
Whom the kings have tried in vain ;
His “ Age of Reason ” they strove to deny,
But he’s still exalted to the sky ;
Angels shall raise their voices to sing
To the praise of the great Thomas Paine.”

“ Well done, CARVER,” said PAINE, “ that’s the best thing you ever wrote”—and it was agreed between them, that if PAINE died first, CARVER was to read this epitaph over his grave, which CARVER promised to do, and actually performed.

His devotion to PAINE and his doctrines changed the man in almost every respect ; in-

stead of going with his wife and children to church, he led them to Long Island or the fields in Jersey; or he went by himself, to some low tavern, and harangued on PAINE's "Age of Reason," to all who would hear him. His children, as they grew up, being left to wander as they pleased, soon associated with bad company, and were a curse instead of a blessing to him. Every thing was forgotten in his zeal for propagating his new principles. You might find him in every street and corner, pouring out his new light; and so vulgar and brutish was the language in which he blasphemed every thing which society holds sacred, that he disgusted almost every one: his company and his shop were shunned, and his worldly affairs began to fall into decay; all his prospects were blighted, and as age grew on apace, his circumstances became more desperate, until at last he found himself without a home, or family, or friends, and was obliged to beg his bread or perish!

"One morning about ten o'clock," says

GRANT THORBURN, "he called on me, and asked for something to buy his breakfast, as he had not tasted any thing that day. I looked on him with sorrow, almost to crying: said I, William, has it really come to this with you? He said he had not a cent, a friend, or child, to help him in the world. I asked for his sons and daughters by name—they had all gone to ruin or were dead. The few old friends of the William-street *illuminati*, now that he was poor, knew him not. I gave him a small sum, and told him to call upon me in his extremity."

He made frequent visits to his old friend THORBURN, who upon one occasion asked him if he would do as he had done, if he could recall the last forty years of his life? He answered firmly, that he would not; that he would not deny his religion, nor forsake his church, and added, that he believed he would have been among the richest mechanics in New York, if he had continued in the belief of the principles he brought with him from England. Who, said Mr. T., now that you

need assistance, do you find most ready to help you, your *free-thinking* friends, or the *church-going* folks? CARVER replied, that during the last winter, (which was in 1832,) he was confined to his bed by sickness, and was often visited by ladies and gentlemen of the Methodist and other churches, and by the members of humane societies; he said they told him, though they were opposed to his principles, yet it was their duty not to see him want; and added that they were very kind to him; but that very few of his free-thinking brethren ever came near him.*

Being now more than eighty years of age, exceedingly deaf and feeble, he presented him-

* For the truth of this statement, the reader is referred to "Grant Thorburn's Life and Times," p. 198. We are thus particular, inasmuch as Mr. Noah recently used the following language in his "Messenger," in noticing the celebration of Paine's birthday:—"Carver, after Paine's death, became very poor, and the pious believer considered himself justified in refusing him alms because he was an infidel, and he was left almost to starve!"

self to the Commissioners of the Poor, and begged to be sent to the Almshouse. His request was granted, and the poor old man, taking his *coffin* with him, took up his abode in the poorhouse; but the discipline of that institution did not accord with his notions of *liberty*, and he left it, to wander houseless and homeless through the streets. His whole appearance was now so truly revolting, that it was painful to come in contact with him—a second childhood had come upon him—he had lost his teeth—his language, always gross and vulgar, was now scarcely intelligible, and to complete this picture of wretchedness, his form, bent with age, was covered with filthy rags. Such was his condition when he appealed to his infidel friends for support; whereupon, a subscription was opened, and after a deal of trouble, a small weekly pittance was subscribed, which was collected with great difficulty.

About this time, ABNER KNEELAND, who had been imprisoned in Boston for blasphemy, visit-

ed New York for the purpose of addressing his infidel friends who were in the habit of assembling at Tammany Hall. CARVER heard of it, and secretly resolved to be present, although he knew his presence there would be offensive. Mr. KNEELAND was to speak on Sabbath afternoon, and just as he was preparing to rise, CARVER made his appearance in the Hall. He was dressed in the habiliments of poverty—his face unwashed and unshaven—his head unshorn, his scanty locks matted and standing in every direction, and as he came, half bent, tottering and shuffling towards the rostrum, he presented a most singular and revolting spectacle. All knew him well, but no one rose to do him reverence, or give him welcome—but all seemed to shrink from him, as though his look or touch was contamination. Arriving at the rostrum, he sank upon a chair, almost exhausted ; but in a moment the fire of his eye was rekindled, and directing his gaze towards the stage, eagerly sought a glance of recognition from the lion of the day, which appeared to be purposely avoid-

ed. At length he caught the eye of Mr. KNEELAND, and springing to his feet, feebly advanced towards him, and seizing Mr. K.'s hand, (who courteously rose to receive him,) his aged form trembling with excitement—exclaimed in quivering, broken accents, accompanied by a child-like cry—"They've let you out, d—n 'em! d—n the Christians, they've had to let you out!—it's the greatest thing for our cause that's happened for fifty years—I wish they'd put *me* in jail—G—d! I do,"—and thus he was proceeding with the most bitter and blasphemous imprecations, denouncing Christianity and Christians, in a manner shocking, even to those who were accustomed to hear sacred matters reviled, when Mr. OFFIN, as presiding officer of the day, requested the old man to be seated, who, obeying with childlike simplicity, resumed his seat, and listened with profound attention to the words of the speaker.

A few months subsequent to this event, on a cold, stormy night, the City Watch found the poor old man lying in the street, almost perished

with cold and hunger : they raised his aged form from the cold earth, and in obedience to their official duty and the dictates of common humanity, carried him to the watch-house ; but even this, the old man considered an infringement of his rights, and actually resisted the watchmen in the execution of their benevolent purpose ; arriving at the watch-house, he gave vent to his feelings in a torrent of imprecations and blasphemies, the most horrid that can be imagined ; cursing God and Christ, the Christian religion, and denouncing the city authorities, in a manner so vehement and terrific, that even the stout-hearted watchmen quailed before him. He had often, in his moments of tranquillity and repose, contemplated committing suicide, as the only way of speedily ending a life, which, to him, had become intolerable ; and this night, in the midst of his ravings, he attempted to execute his fatal purpose, but was with some difficulty prevented, and being closely watched during the night, he lived to see the light of another day. CARVER never forgot nor

forgave the city authorities for this night's incarceration, but often spoke of it with bitterness and indignation.

Being conscious that his dissolution must soon take place, and having succeeded so well in writing an epitaph for his friend PAINE, he prepared one for himself, of which the following is a true copy :—

“Here lies Carver, a farrier and a deist,
Who in his youth had been a polytheist,
Until by reflection, he could not be bro't to see,
How one Almighty God made one Almighty three.”

He also wrote an address to be read at his funeral, (in imitation of PAINE,) and, as he hoped and expected to be buried at New Rochelle, near the grave of his old friend, in ground *not* “consecrated,” he prepared it to meet this view of the case, and was quite as characteristic of the man, as were his epitaphs. After he had attained the age of about eighty-five, in the month of February, 1840, he arose one morning, and dressed himself as usual, but

when a messenger entered his room to call him to his morning meal, he found him stretched upon the floor, lying upon his face—dead ! having died in a fit, without a moment's warning.

Thus lived and died, a man who was naturally kind and benevolent, and who might have lived usefully and happily, and died respected, had he adhered to the religion of his youth, instead of repudiating the gospel of Christ, and adopting the dark and gloomy doctrines of PAINE.

JOHN FELLOWS was another of PAINE's disciples and intimate friends, and a leading member of the infidel party. He was a man of superior intellect—a good writer, and the author of several works. In the early part of his life he maintained a respectable standing in society, and at one time held a very lucrative office under the government ; but when he closed his earthly career, he was quite poor, having subsisted for a long time upon the scanty pay re-

ceived for his services as *doorkeeper* to one of our city courts.

Two other members, who were as notorious for their zeal in spreading infidelity, as for their Sabbath-breaking, died suddenly, leaving their wives and children beggars. One of them was a baker, and in a fit of intemperance, while working dough in the trough alone, lost his balance, tumbled in, burying his head in the dough, and in this situation was found dead !*

Some years after this event, another sad accident happened to one of their most valued and respected members. The society had been in a flourishing condition for some time, and its test of merit now consisted in transcendent blasphemy, and he who could excel in this fearful qualification, was entitled to the Presidential chair. "On a certain occasion, one of their members, a hoary-headed old sinner, had exceeded the rest, and was conducted to his dear-earned seat of distinction ; and as his compan-

* Grant Thorburn's *Forty Years in America*, p. 193.

ions in guilt were on the point of placing on his head the coronal of impiety, he fell lifeless on the floor ! The society, astounded at the event, disbanded, and the author of this anecdote, himself a member and an eye-witness, renounced infidelity and embraced Christianity.*

* This anecdote is copied from one of Origen Bachelor's letters to Robert Dale Owen, in their celebrated controversy on the "Existence of a God." It is there given on the authority of Dr. Rogers, of this city, who had the account from the "eye-witness."

CHAPTER V.

Reorganization of the Infidel party by BENJAMIN OFFIN—They meet in Wiggins and Pearson's bookstore—Mr. Offin makes his *debut* as a lecturer on Infidelity—Failure of Wiggins and Pearson—Removal of the new society to Tammany Hall—Conversion of Abner Kneeland—Is employed by the Moral Philanthropists—Removes to Boston—Mr. Offin supplies his place—Character of the meetings at Tammany Hall—Sunday evening scene—Col. Finley and Gen. Williamson, of Baltimore, forcibly ejected and taken to the watch-house—Col. Finley's Address to the citizens of New York—Decline of the Society, and its final dissolution.

IT was some years after the remarkable death of their impious President, before the Infidels of New York again organized, when they were rallied by BENJAMIN OFFIN, who is accountable for all the evil consequences resulting therefrom. Mr. OFFIN was a hard working, industrious shoemaker; an Englishman by birth, with but little education, and no refinement, but possessing extraordinary natural powers of mind, to which he gave but one direction, and that, towards the destruction of

Christianity, which appeared to be the great object of his life, and which he pursued with the most indomitable energy and untiring zeal. He rallied the friends of Infidelity, now some twenty years ago, by getting up a festival in honor of PAINE's birthday, which has been celebrated ever since. At this celebration he came in contact with materials suited to his purpose, out of which he subsequently formed the society of "Moral Philanthropists!" Their first public meetings were held in an old wooden building in William-street, occupied by two skeptics (Wiggins and Pearson) as a book-auction store. Here Mr. OFFIN made his *debut* as a public advocate of Infidelity—and, assisted by such talent as could be commanded at that day, the society continued to desecrate the Sabbath by holding their impious meetings, until the proprietors of the store *failed* in business, when the "Moral Philanthropists" established themselves at Tammany Hall.

Their first great triumph was the conversion of Rev. ABNER KNEELAND, who about this

time renounced Universalism, and stepped forth upon the broad platform of Atheism. In order to avail themselves of his *wisdom*, the "Moral Philanthropists" employed him at a salary of several hundred dollars per annum, to lecture in their Hall, and for a time they went on very prosperously; but eventually the society found it difficult to pay the salary, and Mr. KNEELAND left them, and soon after commenced *his labors of love* in the city of Boston, his place at Tammany Hall being filled by Mr. OFFIN, without a salary. These were the palmiest days of the "Moral Philanthropists"—the blunt originality, coarse wit, and gross profanity of Offin, delighted the Infidels, and drew thousands of curious spectators. To increase the attraction, they organized a choir of singers, who were assisted by a number of instrumental performers. They had a volume of odes printed for the use of the audience, and contrived in a variety of ways to render their meetings attractive, and for a long time crowds of people desecrated the Sabbath by listening to the

senseless and wicked harangues of Offin and his associates.

Those who never attended the meetings of the "Moral Philanthropists," cannot have a just conception of their character. We have often seen strangers enter the Hall, who, after listening a few minutes, would rush from it as though they were escaping from the bottomless pit, so shocking was the profanity of the speakers, exceeding any thing that Paine ever wrote, or Voltaire imagined. A curious scene, growing out of the excited feelings and indignation of a very respectable gentleman, was enacted in the Hall one Sunday evening, in the spring of 1835. Col. FINLEY and Gen. WILLIAMSON, two highly respectable lawyers, of Baltimore, were led by curiosity to enter the Hall; the meeting was addressed by Messrs. PURSER (now Alderman Purser) and OFFIN. At the close of Mr. Offin's address, Col. FINLEY, greatly excited by what he had heard, requested permission of the speakers to reply, but was refused; he then requested

the President to give him leave, but without success, and finally he appealed to the audience, who were disposed to hear him, but the "*Liberals*" had decreed that he should *not* be heard, and they accordingly seized the two strangers, and violently ejected them, continuing their assault until they reached the street, when the *watch* was called, and the two gentlemen were taken to the watch-house, but after hearing a statement of the case, the Captain of the watch immediately discharged them. A few days after this event, Col. FINLEY addressed a lengthy and able article "to the Corporate Authorities and the citizens of New York," detailing the circumstances of the case, and calling upon the authorities to suppress the Infidel meetings at Tammany Hall. His description of the meeting, prior to the *mélée* is so correct and graphic, that we have transcribed it for the benefit of the reader.

"The doorkeeper required of us a sixpence each, as the price of admission, which we paid, and took our seats on one of the back

benches. On looking round, I discovered, that of the audience, which nearly filled the large Hall, about one-half consisted of respectably dressed females, of all ages, from the young girl just blooming into womanhood, to the aged matron. Immediately on the left of the pulpit, on the front bench, were seated a number of venerable old men, some bald from age, and others with scanty locks, which had been whitened by the frost of many score of winters. In the rear of them, were a number of persons with musical instruments in their hands; and nearly fronting the pulpit, was a gentleman, in appearance, with a beautiful and interesting boy, apparently about five years of age, in his arms, whose youthful glance appeared to be directed, with fascinated influence, to the speaker in the pulpit. The rest of the audience were well-dressed persons—many of them youths from sixteen to eighteen years of age. After making this rapid survey, and directing our attention to the speaker, our prepossessions were at once excited in his

favor. He was apparently about twenty-five or thirty years of age ; of handsome personal appearance—winning address—musical voice,—and exhibiting great powers of elocution. He was passing in review the different systems of theology of the various sects and nations of the world, showing much historical research, and evidencing much talent. We were delighted, and congratulated each other on having gone to the Hall. A revulsion of feelings, however, soon took place—when, on his making a practical application of what he had been reviewing, the result of all his facts and reasoning was *Infidelity* in its most undisguised, naked, and disgusting form. When he finished his address, which was evidently a prepared one, he resigned his place in the pulpit to an elderly man, of rude manners and most unprepossessing exterior, who read from a book several verses, which were sung by most of the audience—principally by the females, accompanied by the musical instruments. The same person then commenced

and delivered an address, which occupied about thirty minutes, and which, for gross ribaldry, impiety, and the most revolting profanity, was never exceeded during the wildest excesses of the French Revolution. I will not enter into the disgusting *detail* of all he said, but merely state a few of his doctrines. He boldly ridiculed and denied the *existence of a God*; declared with emphasis that the *Holy Bible* was a *humbug*, and that all professors of religion were wily hypocrites, whose sole object was to fill their bellies with beef and pudding. I listened with horror and astonishment,—horror that any civilized or human being should openly profess a belief in such doctrines—astonishment that the promulgation of them should be tolerated in *any* community. I looked round at the audience. The old men nodded assent even to the most ultra of his doctrines; the females, whose sensitive feelings and lively imaginations too often make them victims of designing men, listened with avidity, and some of them even responded with

a laugh to his grossest ribaldry. A youth of not more than sixteen, next to whom I sat, in response to some of the doctrines, exclaimed, 'that's true!' and the little boy, in the arms of his father, near the front of the pulpit, whose ductile mind and warm infantile feelings were prepared to receive any impression—for good or for bad—with opened mouth, and eyes beaming with interest and intelligence, drank in the polluted stream from the old man's lips."

This address made some impression upon the public mind, but no attempt, however, was made to suppress the meetings by legal means, nor was it necessary; for that same Providence who had hitherto overruled the designs of the Infidel, was still sufficient for that purpose.

The splendid campaign which was opened by FRANCES WRIGHT and ROBERT DALE OWEN, resulted in the formation of another society, which of course divided the Infidel party, and weakened its power; and after the "Concert

Hall Society" had disbanded, the interest in the meetings at Tammany Hall began to decline—the receipts fell short of the expenses—the musicians, one by one, dropped off—some deserted the Hall, others died, and the principal instrumental performer *suddenly lost the use of his limbs*, when music no longer lent its charms to these works of darkness. The *orators* too, had nearly all departed,—Frances Wright had gone to Europe—Owen had retired to the west to commence his political career—the voice of Houston, the author of that blasphemous "*Ecce Homo*," was no longer heard. Purser had abandoned Infidel discussions, and Offin was left alone in his glory, where he remained until the infirmities of age compelled *him* to retire, and the society ceased to exist; and thus did God, in his own good time and way, arrest the career of those who vainly imagined they could bring the glorious religion of Christ into contempt, and stay its onward course.

CHAPTER VI.

Arrival of Frances Wright and Robert Dale Owen—Dedication of the Hall of Science—Great apparent prosperity of Infidelity—The Concert Hall party—Character of the meetings at that place—Blasphemous and indecent lecture by a female—Presumptuous language of a speaker—Dares the Almighty to seal his lips—Loses the power of speech, and resumes his seat amid a shower of hisses—Public recantation of Christianity by a woman—Violent and instantaneous death of her Infidel husband.

THE appearance of FRANCES WRIGHT and ROBERT DALE OWEN in this city, and the conversion of ABNER KNEELAND to Atheism, appeared to give a fresh impetus to Infidel operations,—the “Hall of Science,” or “Temple of Reason,” was founded, whence the light of Infidelity was to shine with such power and splendor, that the whole world was to be illuminated—error was to be banished the earth—the horrible doctrines of Christ were to give way to the beauties of Atheism—and man, lost, degenerate man, was *now* to be redeemed! But alas for human calculations! The hand

of God was there also,—for scarcely had the “*Temple of Reason*” acquired a name, before its lights were extinguished—its glories departed—and few at this day can point the inquirer to the consecrated spot where this *mighty temple* “reared its solemn front !”

Infidelity appeared more prosperous throughout the whole country, and probably was at the zenith of its glory about the period in which the “*Hall of Science*” was dedicated to *Virtue, Morality, Purity, and Atheism*, by Miss Frances Wright. “*Liberal*” newspapers were springing up in all parts of the country, or wherever the soil appeared at all congenial to their growth; societies, too, for the propagation of *Truth, in opposition to Divine Revelation*, were becoming numerous, and in the State of New York, the Infidel party made an effort at *political action**—and the timid Chris-

* It is worthy of notice, in this connection, that this party, in the fall of 1834, posted about the city a blasphemous political handbill, which was a parody upon the Lord's Prayer, and a portion of the Episcopal service !

tian began to fear that the *whole nation* would soon be converted to *Infidelity*—that the *Goddess of Reason* would shortly be enthroned—and that the knee must be bent in divine homage to *her*, instead of the great Governor of the world, or the Saviour of man, at whose birth “*the morning stars sang together, and the angels of heaven shouted for joy.*”

After the total abandonment of the Hall of Science, the followers of Frances Wright appear to have had no settled place of meeting, until they procured *Concert Hall*, at which place, together with Tammany Hall, the two societies, constituting the Infidel party of the city, held their meetings. The fame, talents, and acknowledged respectability of some of the Infidel orators—the novelty of their doctrines—the fact that ladies did, and were encouraged to lecture—and the great attention paid to music, were all calculated to draw crowded assemblies, and it cannot be denied that they made many converts.

In illustration of this, we will here relate

a single instance, showing at the same time the character, as well as the influence of the meetings at Concert Hall.

On a certain occasion it was announced, that on the next Sunday afternoon a lady would deliver a lecture. The day and hour arrived—the Hall was crowded—and as it was unknown to the audience generally, who the fair speaker was to be, much curiosity and excitement prevailed:—the interesting moment arrived—a beautiful and fashionably dressed lady ascended the rostrum, and *read* a dissertation upon the MIRACULOUS CONCEPTION AND BIRTH OF OUR SAVIOUR! It was awfully blasphemous, and too indelicate to present our readers with even a single quotation. Notwithstanding the infamous character of the dissertation, she read it without the least embarrassment—no blushes crimsoned her cheeks—but, on finishing a sentence reflecting on the *virtue of the Mother of Jesus*, and attempting to show the *physical impossibility* of her *purity*, she raised her eyes to the audience,

and, by her bold and significant manner, proclaimed the triumph she imagined *such philosophy* had over *divine revelation*!

She had no sooner taken her seat, than an officer of the society arose, and by way of apology, stated to the audience that he had no previous knowledge of the *character* of the lecture to be given, but that he hoped the day was not far distant, when public opinion and female education would sanction the *public discussion of such subjects by female lips*!

Horror-stricken by what she had heard, an old lady arose in the midst of the assembly, and in a quivering, but loud voice, proclaimed her entire disapprobation, and finished her remarks by saying, that she hoped the education of the lady would admonish her not again to revile the character of *her dear Saviour*, and greatly excited, left the Hall—as it were, shaking its very dust from her feet. Not long after these extraordinary scenes had been enacted, it was again announced that a *lady* would address the meeting; but what was our

astonishment, when in the character of the speaker we beheld the very woman who had so recently given such decided demonstrations of attachment to “*her dear Saviour!*”

Alas ! *Infidelity* had triumphed ! Her husband’s incessant importunities, (for he was an old veteran in the skeptic’s cause,) and the crowd of influences by which she was surrounded, had finally blinded her moral perceptions—the last link was broken that bound her affections to her first love, and she was now seen ascending the rostrum, from which she proclaimed her entire conversion to Infidelity, and her willingness to use all her influence to dispel the gross darkness in which the moral world was enveloped—to unfold the beauties of her new system—and to roll back the tide of error now desolating the earth !

The harangue of this woman was wild and enthusiastic ; she had for many years been a devoted Christian, full of zeal and energy in her advocacy of Christianity, but having dis-

covered her error, as she supposed, was exceedingly anxious to atone for the past, and therefore increased her zeal in favor of her new faith. She was an aged wife and mother, and her conversion was a source of great pleasure to her husband, who was a prominent member of the Concert Hall party, frequently addressed the meetings, and was distinguished for the intemperate manner in which he advocated his cause. In his younger days he also had been a professing Christian, and a constant worshipper at the tabernacle of the Lord, where the pure in heart, the meek in spirit, and the real lovers of our "dear Saviour," find joys that none but the true Christian can know or feel. Infidelity had turned the current of his affections—his soul no longer delighted in holiness—his voice was no more heard in prayer—the family altar, that holy, happy, and ennobling shrine, was entirely deserted—and his mind, wandering in darkness and in doubt, had become gross and corrupt, and now his distinguishing trait was the low ribaldry and

vulgar witticisms with which he delighted his associates at Concert Hall.

His former habits of prayer and praise afforded a fruitful theme for ridicule ; nor did he neglect any opportunity to cast odium and contempt upon family worship. Ministers of the gospel and *church* organizations were also subjects of his particular derision, and all that a weak and imbecile imagination could invent, was poured out against God's people, their institutions, and all they hold dear and sacred. Such was the character of this aged pair : on the brink of the grave, and apparently fearless of the terrors of eternity, they sought pleasure in open and outrageous rebellion against the Most High ; but the man's cup of iniquity was full, and that whom he had deserted and blasphemed, had determined, for purposes of his own, to destroy his life in a sudden and unnatural manner, thus adding force to the fact that it is a fearful thing to incur His high displeasure.

The old man was one day travelling in New

Jersey, when a violent storm arose ; he sought no shelter from its fury, but continued his course, contending with the elements for the exercise of his powers of locomotion. As the feeble traveller was attempting to pass a *church*, the angry wind, as if conscious of the detestation in which the hoary-headed Infidel held the sacred edifice, tore from it a fragment and hurled it against him, with sufficient force to deprive¹⁰⁸ him of life in a moment ! And thus a bold blasphemer perished—slain, as it were, at the very foot of the altar ; but the warning was not heeded by those who were left.

Among the remaining active members of the Concert Hall¹⁰⁹ was a Mr. B—l, remarkable for his deformity, the muscles of one of his legs being contracted. He was a man of more than ordinary intelligence, and frequently participated in the public debates, which were of frequent occurrence at the Hall. This man, in one of his harangues, had the presumption to *defy* the Almighty's power, and

dared Him in the most blasphemous manner to seal *his* lips! Suddenly, thereafter, he became confused—his tongue faltered—his language became incoherent, and his hearers becoming disgusted, manifested their displeasure, and finishing his address with great difficulty, he sat down amid a shower of hisses. A short time subsequent to this event, he died a raving maniac! and his wife, who was a talented skeptic, renounced Infidelity, and united with the church.

CHAPTER VII.

Sudden and violent death of Cohen, the Atheist—Decline and final dissolution of the Concert Hall party—The *Free Enquirer* newspaper ceases to exist—sudden death of one of its printers.

AMONG the most prominent *Free Enquirers*, as the Concert Hall party was denominated, was C. C. C. COHEN, whose terrible death must still be fresh in the memory of the reader. He was the life and soul of Concert Hall—highly respectable—gifted by nature with a strong and powerful intellect, which a liberal education had greatly improved. Being a philosopher by profession, he was listened to as a kind of oracle. His untimely and melancholy death produced a great sensation, and it was generally conceded that it was a special demonstration of God's vengeance.

Mr. COHEN, though quite a young man, was an excellent chemist, and his readings generally were varied, scientific, and full of

interest; but in matters of religion, he took a singular and extraordinary turn, and from being well educated in the Jewish faith, he became an *Atheist*; and we think we can safely say, almost the only one of that persuasion, who in any change of religion, utterly abandoned and surrendered all belief in a great First Cause. Mr. Cohen joined the society of Free Enquirers, and preached Atheistical doctrines, and was a correspondent and contributor to their paper, (the Free Enquirer;) and we notice this fact, to relate a singular circumstance connected with his writing and his death.

After Abner Kneeland had been tried and convicted in Boston of blasphemy, and before sentence, he published a kind of explanation of his creed, which in a great measure softened, if it did not entirely do away with the belief that he was an Atheist. This recantation gave great offence to the Free Enquirers generally, but particularly to Mr. Cohen, who assailed him for so doing in the columns of

the *Free Enquirer*, published in the city of New York. The words of Mr. Kneeland were as follows :—

“Hence I am not an *Atheist*, but a *Pantheist*,—that is, instead of believing there is no God, I believe, in the abstract, that all is God, and that all power that is, is God, and that there is no power except that which proceeds from God.”

In an article which he signed with his name, Mr. Cohen assailed such “*jargon*,” as he called it, and made this emphatic remark,—“*For my own part, I should say, I can attach no idea to the word of God, and cannot consequently believe in Him!*”

This was printed on Saturday, Feb. 16, (1834,) and on the very day that such an avowal was made, under the deliberate sanction of his name, he was blown to pieces in his laboratory, while making fulminating powder! His head, by an understanding among the Free Enquirers, was given to the Society for phrenological studies; and his arm, which

was blown off, was never found. Thus, his body has gone one way, his head another, and his limb another—scattered, we may say, to the winds. Now, philosophers may smile, free-thinkers may laugh, and Atheists may ridicule the idea of divine interposition, or divine vengeance—all have a right to make their comments, but say what they may, it was a singular coincidence of *profession* and *catastrophe*.

Poor Cohen was a Jew, a well-educated Jew—of all nations on earth the last to renounce their God—his chosen and favored people—he who brought them out of the land of Egypt—from captivity and bondage—who was their cloud by day, and their pillar of fire by night—who gave into their safe-keeping, the great moral law which now governs every civilized nation—he who even now keeps them together as a distinct and separate nation for great objects hereafter. To disclaim, and renounce, and deny *that* God, is a most rare and extraordinary instance indeed! To so live

without faith, and die without hope ! to openly deny the existence of God, and in the same moment, as it were, be hurried into his presence, is terrible indeed !*

Cohen was an attractive and eloquent speaker, and always drew crowded assemblies ; his death, therefore, to say nothing of its peculiar circumstances, was a severe blow to the "Free Enquirers," whose principal orators were now dead, or had abandoned the Hall : their accredited organ, the "Free Enquirer" newspaper, no longer receiving sufficient patronage, also ceased to exist, and under the pressure of all these circumstances, the society itself rapidly declined, and finally disbanded.

It is also a fact worthy of notice, that one of the printers of the "Free Enquirer" fell dead in his room, without a moment's warning or previous indisposition !

Since the abandonment of the two societies, several attempts have been made to reorganize,

* Noah's Evening Star.

and notwithstanding the presence and aid of the venerable ROBERT OWEN, a permanent organization could not be effected; thus, in the Providence of God, the "tiger," although "un-chained," has been shorn of his strength.

CHAPTER VIII.

One of the practical results of Infidelity in New York—Brief historical sketch of Madame Restell.

AMONG those who were constant in their attendance at the Tammany Hall meetings, was a young man distinguished for his rank Atheism, and zeal in support of the peculiar doctrines of WRIGHT and OWEN. He was a Russian by birth, and a printer by profession; but having a defect in one of his eyes, he was not a very rapid compositor, and therefore made but small wages; he was intelligent, industrious, and enterprising, and when not engaged at work, was generally absorbed in religious discussions, or secretly poring over the work of some Infidel writer. He was an enthusiastic disciple of MALTHUS—stoutly maintained the correctness of his theory, and labored hard to convince others that unless the re-

production of the human species was arrested in some way, the time would come when the earth's surface would be too small for its inhabitants! He did not believe that children were a *blessing* to the poor, or that poor children were a benefit to the State, and therefore, that duty and benevolence demanded the prevention of their production! This was his favorite theme—and when Frances Wright and Robert Dale Owen published their work entitled “*Moral Physiology*,” embracing similar views,* and giving practical instructions to parents touching the manner of preventing offspring, he rapaciously devoured its contents—adopted its philosophy—carried the book in his pocket, and read it to all who would listen to its immoral doctrines. This subject was

* Malthus proposed late marriages, or entire celibacy, as the best means of preventing an over-population, but Wright and Owen maintained that it was natural, and therefore right and proper, for the sexes to indulge in unrestrained intercourse, upon condition that they prevented the reproduction of their species.

now of more interest to him than any other, and wherever he went, he was sympathizing with the *poor* who were compelled to “tug and toil” for the support of their children.

In the course of time he became acquainted with a young English woman, who occasionally went to the Tammany Hall meetings. She was a lady of great personal beauty—of much more than ordinary intelligence—and although poor, respectably maintained herself and child by her industry, being a tailoress by trade. Having been converted to the doctrines of Frances Wright, there was no difference of opinion between her and her *Russian* friend, and being, altogether, congenial spirits, they finally agreed to *unite*, and were thereafter recognised as man and wife, and were constant in their attendance at Tammany Hall. They soon began to form plans for the future; they were poor, and desired riches—and as they did not believe in their accountability to God for their conduct here, it mattered not how they acquired wealth, so that they escaped the

meshes of the law, which they feared but little, knowing that the eyes of justice were sometimes blinded by gold. At last their plans were all matured, when the lady announced to the public, under the assumed name of MADAME RESTELL, that she was prepared to put into practical operation the *benevolent* (!) doctrines of Frances Wright and Robert Dale Owen; and from that hour to this, she has continued her work of destruction, extending far and wide her baleful influence.

This is *one* of the direct practical results of the propagation of Infidel doctrines in the city of New York, the teaching of which, in any community, may very justly be considered a public calamity.

APPENDIX.

Visitations of God's Judgment upon the early enemies of Christianity—Sufferings of Herod the Great—Punishment of Herod Antipas, who beheaded John the Baptist—Herod Agrippa, eaten by worms—Judas hung himself—Pontius Pilate slew himself—Ananias, the persecutor of St. Paul, slain by his own son—Nero, being condemned to be whipped to death, kills himself—Domitian (who threw St. John into a caldron of boiling oil) murdered—Destruction of the Jewish nation—Flaccus, governor of Egypt, dies by violence—Horrible death of Catullus—Caius, the blasphemer, murdered—Claudius Herminianus, a cruel persecutor, eaten by worms while yet alive—Degradation and death of Valerion, the implacable enemy of Christ—Maximianus, a cruel persecutor, seized with a horrible disease, and dies an awful death—Maximinus puts out the eyes of thousands of Christians, dies soon after upon the rack, his eyes starting from his head, and all his family destroyed, &c., &c.

HEROD the Great was the first persecutor of Christianity. He attempted to destroy Jesus Christ himself, while he was yet but a child, and for that wicked purpose slew all the male children that were in and about Bethlehem. What was the consequence? Josephus has told us: he had long and grievous sufferings, a burning fever, a voracious appetite, a difficulty of breathing,

swellings of his limbs, loathsome ulcers within and without, breeding vermin, violent torments and convulsions; so that he endeavored to kill himself, but was restrained by his friends. The Jews thought these evils to be divine judgments upon him for his wickedness. And what is still more remarkable in his case is, he left a numerous family of children and grandchildren, though he had put some to death; and yet in about the space of one hundred years the whole family was extinct.

Herod Antipas, who beheaded John the Baptist, and treated Christ contemptuously when he was brought before him, was defeated by Aretas, an Arabian king, and afterwards had his dominions taken from him, and was sent into banishment along with his infamous wife Herodias, by the emperor Caius.

Herod Agrippa killed James the brother of John, and put Peter in prison. The angel of the Lord soon after smote him, and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.

Judas, that betrayed our Lord, died, by his own hands, the most ignominious of all deaths.

Pontius Pilate, who condemned our blessed Saviour to death, was not long afterwards deposed from his office, banished from his country, and died by his own hands; the divine vengeance overtaking him soon after his crime.

The high-priest Caiaphas, was deposed by Vitellius, three years after the death of Christ. Thus this wicked man, who condemned Christ for fear of disobliging the Romans, was ignominiously turned out of his office by the Roman governor, whom he had sought to oblige.

Ananias, the high-priest, persecuted St. Paul, and insolently ordered the bystanders to smite him on the mouth. Upon which the apostle said, *God shall smite thee, thou whited wall.* Whether he spake this prophetically or not, may be difficult to say; but certain it is, that sometime after he was slain, together with his brother, by his own son.

Ananus, the high-priest, slew St. James the Less; for which and other outrages he was deposed by King Agrippa the younger, and probably perished in the last destruction of Jerusalem.

Nero, in the year 64, turned his rage upon

the Christians, and put to death Peter and Paul, with many others. Four years after, in his great distress, he attempted to kill himself; but being as mean-spirited and dastardly as he was wicked and cruel, he had not the resolution to do that piece of justice to the world, and was forced to beg assistance.

Domitian persecuted the Christians also. It is said he threw St. John into a caldron of boiling oil, and afterwards banished him into the Isle of Patmos. In the following year this monster of wickedness was murdered by his own people.

The Jewish nation persecuted, rejected, and crucified the Lord of glory. Within a few years after, their nation was destroyed, and the Lord made their plagues wonderful.

The judgments which God has exercised upon this people are terrible, extending to the men, the religion, and the very land in which they dwelt. The ceremonies essential to their religion can no more be observed; the ritual law, which cast a splendor on the national worship, and struck the Pagans so much that they sent their presents and their victims to Jerusalem, is absolutely fallen.

for they have no temple, no altar, no sacrifices. Their land itself seems to lie under a never-ceasing curse. Pagans, Christians, Mohammedans, in a word, almost all nations have by turns seized and held Jerusalem. To the Jew only hath God refused the possession of this small tract of ground, so supremely necessary for him, since he ought to worship on this mountain. A Jewish writer has affirmed, that it is long since any Jew has been settled near Jerusalem: scarcely can they purchase there six feet of land for a burying-place.

It is hardly possible to consider the nature and extent of their sufferings, and not conclude the Jews' own imprecation to be singularly fulfilled upon them, Matt. xxvii. 25: "His blood be on us and our children." At Cesarea twenty thousand of the Jews were killed by the Syrians in their mutual broils. At Damascus ten thousand unarmed Jews were killed: and at Bethshan the heathen inhabitants caused their Jewish neighbors to assist them against their brethren, and then murdered thirteen thousand of these inhabitants. At Alexandria the Jews murdered multitudes of

the heathens, and were murdered in their turn to about fifty thousand. The Romans under Vespasian invaded the country, and took the cities of Galilee, Chorazen, Bethsaida, Capernaum, &c., where Christ had been especially rejected, and murdered numbers of the inhabitants. At Jerusalem the scene was most wretched of all. At the passover, when there might be two or three millions of people in the city, the Romans surrounded it with troops, trenches, and walls, that none might escape. The three different factions within murdered one another. Titus, one of the most merciful generals that ever breathed, did all in his power to persuade them to an advantageous surrender, but they scorned every proposal. The multitudes of unburied carcasses corrupted the air, and produced a pestilence. The people fed on one another; and even ladies, it is said, broiled their sucking infants, and ate them. After a siege of six months, the city was taken. They murdered almost every Jew they met with. Titus was bent to save the temple, but could not: there were six thousand Jews who had taken shelter in it, all burnt or murdered!

The outcries of the Jews, when they saw it, were most dreadful: the whole city, except three towers and a small part of the wall, was razed to the ground, and the foundations of the temple and other places were ploughed up. Soon after the forts of Herodian and Macheron were taken, the garrison of Massada murdered themselves rather than surrender. At Jerusalem alone, it is said, one million one hundred thousand perished by sword, famine, and pestilence. In other places we hear of two hundred and fifty thousand that were cut off, besides vast numbers sent into Egypt to labor as slaves. About fifty years after, the Jews murdered about five hundred thousand of the Roman subjects, for which they were severely punished by Trajan. About 130, one Barocaba pretended that he was the Messiah, and raised a Jewish army of two hundred thousand, who murdered all the heathens and Christians who came in their way; but he was defeated by Adrian's forces. In this war, it is said, about sixty thousand Jews were slain, and perished. Adrian built a city on Mount Calvary, and erected a marble statue of swine over the gate

that led to Bethlehem. No Jew was allowed to enter the city, or to look to it at a distance, under pain of death. In 360 they began to rebuild their city and temple; but a terrible earthquake and flames of fire issuing from the earth, killed the workmen, and scattered their materials. Nor till the seventh century durst they so much as creep over the rubbish to bewail it, without bribing the guards. In the third, fourth, and fifth centuries, there were many of them furiously harassed and murdered. In the sixth century twenty thousand of them were slain, and as many taken and sold for slaves. In 602 they were severely punished for their horrible massacre of the Christians at Antioch. In Spain, in 700, they were ordered to be enslaved. In the eighth and ninth centuries they were greatly derided and abused; in some places they were made to wear leathern girdles, and ride without stirrups on asses and mules. In France and Spain they were much insulted. In the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries, their miseries rather increased: they were greatly persecuted in Egypt. Besides what they suffered in the East by the Turkish

and sacred war, it is shocking to think what multitudes of them the eight crusades murdered in Germany, Hungary, Lesser Asia, and elsewhere. In France multitudes were burnt. In England, in 1020, they were banished; and at the coronation of Richard I., the mob fell upon them, and murdered a great many of them. About one thousand five hundred of them were burnt in the palace in the city of York, which they set fire to, themselves, after killing their wives and children. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries their condition was no better. In Egypt, Canaan, and Syria, the crusaders still harassed them. Provoked with their mad running after pretended Messiahs, Califf Nasser scarce left any of them alive in his dominions of Mesopotamia. In Persia, the Tartars murdered them in multitudes. In Spain, Ferdinand persecuted them furiously. About 1349, the terrible massacre of them at Toledo forced many of them to murder themselves, or change their religion. About 1253, many were murdered, and others banished from France, but in 1275 recalled. In 1320 and 1330, the crusades of the fanatic shep-

herds, who wasted the south of France, massacred them ; besides fifteen hundred that were murdered on another occasion. In 1358 they were totally banished from France, since which few of them have entered that country. In 1291 King Edward expelled them from England, to the number of one hundred and sixty thousand. In the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, their misery continued. In Persia they have been terribly used : from 1663 to 1666, the murder of them was so universal, that but a few escaped to Turkey. In Portugal and Spain, they have been miserably handled. About 1392, six or eight hundred thousand were banished from Spain. Some were drowned in their passage to Africa ; some died by hard usage ; and many of their carcasses lay in the fields till the wild beasts devoured them. In Germany they have endured many hardships. They have been banished from Bohemia, Bavaria, Cologne, Nuremberg, Augsburg, and Vienna : they have been terribly massacred in Moravia, and plundered in Bonn and Bamberg. Except in Portugal and Spain, their present condition is generally tolerable. In Hol-

land, Poland, and at Frankfort and Hamburgh, they have their liberty. They have repeatedly, but in vain, attempted to obtain a naturalization in England, and other nations among whom they are scattered.

Flaccus was governor of Egypt near the time of our Saviour's death, and a violent persecutor of the Jews. The wrath of God, however, ere long overtook him, and he died by the hands of violence.

Catullus was governor of Libya about the year 73. He was also a cruel persecutor of the Jews, and he died miserably. For though he was only turned out of his office by the Romans, yet he fell into a complicated and incurable disease, being sorely tormented both in body and mind. He was dreadfully terrified, and continually crying out that he was haunted by the ghosts of those whom he had murdered; and, not being able to contain himself, he leaped out of his bed, as if he were tortured with fire and put to the rack. His distemper increased till his entrails were all corrupted, and came out of his body; and thus he perished, as signal an example as

ever was known of the divine justice rendering to the wicked according to their deeds.

Caius, the Roman emperor, was a great persecutor of the Jews and Christians, and a blasphemer of the God of heaven. Soon after his atrocities, however, he was murdered by one of his own people.

Severus, emperor of Rome, was a violent and cruel persecutor of the followers of Christ. He also, and all his family, perished miserably, about the year 200 after our Saviour.

About the same time, Saturnius, governor of Africa, persecuted the Christians and put several of them to death. Soon after, he went blind.

Heliogabalus, the emperor, brought a new god to Rome, and would needs compel all his subjects to worship him. This was sure to have ended in a persecution of the Christians. But, soon after, this vile monster was slain by his own soldiers, about the year 222.

Claudius Herminianus was a cruel persecutor of the Christians in the second century, and he was eaten of worms while he lived.

Decius persecuted the church about the year

two hundred and fifty : he was soon after killed in battle.

Gallus succeeded, and continued the persecution. He, too, was killed the year following.

Valerian, the emperor, had many good qualities ; but yet he was an implacable enemy to the Lord Jesus Christ and his gospel. Some time after he came to the throne, he was taken prisoner by Sapor, king of Persia, and used like a slave and a dog ; for the Persian monarch, from time to time, obliged this unhappy emperor to bow himself down, and offer him his back, on which to set his foot, in order to mount his chariot or his horse. He died in this miserable state of captivity.

Æmilian, governor of Egypt, about 263, was a virulent persecutor of the church of Christ. He was soon after strangled by order of the emperor.

Aurelian, the emperor, just intending to begin a persecution against the followers of Christ, was killed in the year 274.

Maximinus was a persecutor of the church. He reigned only three years, and then fell under the hands of violence.

About the year 300, was the greatest possible contest between Christ and the Roman emperors, which should have the dominion. These illustrious wretches seemed determined to blot out the Christian race and name from under heaven. The persecution was far more fierce and brutal than it had ever been. It was time, therefore, for the Lord Jesus Christ, the great head of the church, to arise and plead his own cause : and so, indeed, he did. The examples we have mentioned are dreadful : these that follow are not less astonishing, and they are all delivered upon the best authorities.

Dioclesian persecuted the church in 303. After this nothing ever prospered with him. He underwent many troubles : his senses became impaired ; and he quitted the empire.

Severus, another persecuting emperor, was overthrown and put to death in the year 307.

About the same time, Urbanus, governor of Palestine, who had signalized himself by tormenting and destroying the disciples of Jesus, met with his due reward ; for almost immediately after the cruelties committed, the divine ven-

geance overtook him. He was unexpectedly degraded and deprived of all his honors ; and, dejected, dispirited, and meanly begging for mercy, was put to death by the same hand that raised him.

Firmilianus, another persecuting governor, met with the same fate.

Maximianus Hercules, another of the wretched persecuting emperors, was compelled to hang himself, in the year 310.

Maximianus Galerius, of all the tyrants of his time the most cruel, was seized with a grievous and horrible disease, and tormented with worms and ulcers to such a degree, that they who were ordered to attend him could not bear the stench. Worms proceeded from his body in a most fearful manner ; and several of his physicians were put to death because they could not endure the smell, and others because they could not cure him. This happened in the year of our Lord 311.

Maxentius, another of the inhuman monsters, was overthrown in battle by Constantine ; and in his flight he fell into the Tiber, and was drowned, in the year 312.

Maximinus put out the eyes of many thousands

of Christians. Soon after the commission of his cruelties, a disease arose among his own people, which greatly affected their eyes, and took away their sight. He himself died miserably, and upon the rack, his eyes starting out of his head through the violence of his distemper, in the year 313. All his family likewise were destroyed, his wife and children put to death, together with most of his friends and dependants, who had been the instruments of his cruelty.

A Roman officer, to oblige this Maximinus, greatly oppressed the church at Damascus: not long after, he destroyed himself.

Licinius, the last of these persecuting emperors before Constantine, was conquered and put to death in the year 323. He was equally an enemy to religion, liberty, and learning.

Cyril, the deacon, was murdered by some Pagans, at Heliopolis, for his opposition to their images. They ripped open his belly, and ate his liver: the divine vengeance, however, pursued all those who had been guilty of this crime; their teeth came out, their tongues rotted, and they lost their sight.

Valens was made emperor in 364 ; and though a Christian himself, he is said to have caused fourscore presbyters, who differed from him in opinion, to be put to sea, and burnt alive in the ship. Afterwards, in a battle with the Goths, he was defeated and wounded, and fled to a cottage, where he was burnt alive, as most historians relate : all agree that he perished.

The last Pagan prince, who was a formidable enemy to Christianity, was Radagaisus, a king of the Goths. He invaded the Roman empire with an army of 400,000 men, about the year 405, and vowed to sacrifice all the Romans to his gods. The Romans, however, fought him, and obtained a complete victory, taking him and his sons prisoners, whom they put to death.

Hunneric, the Vandal, though a Christian, was a most cruel persecutor of those who differed from him in opinion, about the year of our Lord 484. He spared not even those of his own persuasion, neither his friends nor his kindred. He reigned, however, not quite eight years, and died with all the marks of divine indignation upon him.

Julian the apostate greatly oppressed the Chris-

tians: and he perished soon after, in his rash expedition against the Persians.

Several of those who were employed or permitted by Julian to persecute the Christians, are said to have perished miserably and remarkably. I will here relate the fate of a few of those unhappy wretches in the words of Tillemont, who faithfully collected the account from the ancients. We have observed, says that learned man, that Count Julian, with Felix, superintendent of the finances, and Elpidius, treasurer to the emperor, apostates all three, had received orders to go and seize the effects of the church at Antioch, and carry them to the treasury. They did it on the day of the martyrdom of St. Theodoret, and drew up an account of what they had seized. But Count Julian was not content with taking away the sacred vessels of the church, and profaning them by his impure hands: carrying to greater lengths the outrage he was doing to Jesus Christ, he overturned and flung them down on the ground, and sat upon them in a most criminal manner; adding to this all the banters and blasphemies that he could devise against Christ, and

against the Christians, who, he said, were abandoned of God.

Felix, the superintendent, signalized himself also by another impiety ; for as he was viewing the rich and magnificent vessels which the emperors Constantine and Constantius had given to the church, "Behold," said he, "with what plate the son of Mary is served !" It is said, too, that Count Julian and he made it the subject of banter, that God should let them thus profane his temple, without interposing by visible miracles.

But these impieties remained not long unpunished, and Julian had no sooner profaned the sacred utensils, than he felt the effects of divine vengeance. He fell into a grievous and unknown disease ; and his inward parts being corrupted, he cast out his liver and his excrements, not from the ordinary passages, but from his miserable mouth, which had uttered so many blasphemies. His secret parts, and all the flesh round about them, corrupted also, and bred worms ; and to show that it was a divine punishment, all the art of physicians could give him no relief. In this condition he continued forty days,

without speech or sense, preyed on by worms. At length he came to himself again. The imposthumes, however, all over his body, and the worms which gnawed him continually, reduced him to the utmost extremity. He threw them up, without ceasing, the last three days of his life, with a stench which he himself could not bear.

The disease with which God visited Felix was not so long. He burst suddenly in the middle of his body, and died of an effusion of blood in the course of one day.

Elpidius was stripped of his effects in 366, and shut up in prison, where, after having continued for some time, he died without reputation and honor, cursed of all the world, and surnamed the Apostate.

To these instances many more might be added. These, however, are sufficient to show us what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God, and how fruitless and awful it is to oppose his designs, and to attempt to stop the progress of his Gospel.

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36 The Fate of infidelity; or, The dealing
48 providence with modern infidels; together
an appendix, containing a brief historical
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